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The Daffodil Fields

By John Masefield

I.

Between the barren pasture and the wood
There is a patch of poultry-stricken grass,
Where, in old time, Ryemeadows' Farmhouse stood,
And human fate brought tragic things to pass.
A spring comes bubbling up there, cold as glass,
It bubbles down, crusting the leaves with lime,
Babbling the self-same song that it has sung through time.

Ducks gobble at the selvage of the brook,
But still it slips away, the cold hill-spring,
Past the Ryemeadows' lonely woodland nook
Where many a stubble gray-goose preens her wing,
On, by the woodland side. You hear it sing
Past the lone copse where poachers set their wires,
Past the green hill once grim with sacrificial fires.

Another water joins it; then it turns,
Runs through the Ponton Wood, still turning west,
Past foxgloves, Canterbury bells, and ferns,
And many a blackbird's, many a thrush's nest;
The cattle tread it there; then, with a zest
It sparkles out, babbling its pretty chatter
Through Foxholes Farm, where it gives white-faced cattle water.

Under the road it runs, and now it slips
Past the great ploughland, babbling, drop and linn,
To the moss'd stumps of elm trees which it lips,
And blackberry-bramble-trails where eddies spin.
Then, on its left, some short-grassed fields begin,
Red-clayed and pleasant, which the young spring fills
With the never-quiet joy of dancing daffodils.

There are three fields where daffodils are found;
The grass is dotted blue-gray with their leaves;
Their nodding beauty shakes along the ground
Up to a fir-clump shutting out the eaves
Of an old farm where always the wind grieves
High in the fir boughs, moaning; people call
This farm The Roughs, but some call it the Poor Maid's Hall.

There, when the first green shoots of tender corn
Show on the plough; when the first drift of white
Stars the black branches of the spiky thorn,
And afternoons are warm and evenings light,
The shivering daffodils do take delight,
Shaking beside the brook, and grass comes green,
And blue dog-violets come and glistening celandine.

And there the pickers come, picking for town
Those dancing daffodils; all day they pick;
Hard-featured women, weather-beaten brown,
Or swarthy-red, the colour of old brick.
At noon they break their meats under the rick.
The smoke of all three farms lifts blue in air
As though man's passionate mind had never suffered there.

And sometimes as they rest an old man comes,
Shepherd or carter, to the hedgerow-side,
And looks upon their gangrel tribe, and hums,
And thinks all gone to wreck since master died;
And sighs over a passionate harvest-tide
Which Death's red sickle reaped under those hills,
There, in the quiet fields among the daffodils.

When this most tragic fate had time and place,
And human hearts and minds to show it by,
Ryemeadows' Farmhouse was in evil case:
Its master, Nicholas Gray, was like to die.
He lay in bed, watching the windy sky,
Where all the rooks were homing on slow wings,
Cawing, or blackly circling in enormous rings.

With a sick brain he watched them; then he took
Paper and pen, and wrote in straggling hand
(Like spider's legs, so much his fingers shook)
Word to the friends who held the adjoining land,
Bidding them come; no more he could command
His fingers twitching to the feebling blood;
He watched his last day's sun dip down behind the wood,

While all his life's thoughts surged about his brain:
Memories and pictures clear, and faces known—
Long dead, perhaps; he was a child again,
Treading a threshold in the dark alone.
Then back the present surged, making him moan.
He asked if Keir had come yet. "No," they said.
"Nor Occleve?" "No." He moaned: "Come soon or I'll
be dead."

The names like live things wandered in his mind:
"Charles Occleve of The Roughs," and "Rowland Keir—
Keir of the Foxholes"; but his brain was blind,
A blind old alley in the storm of the year,
Baffling the traveller life with "No way here,"
For all his lantern raised; life would not tread
Within that brain again, along those pathways red.

Soon all was dimmed but in the heaven one star.
"I'll hold to that," he said; then footsteps stirred.
Down in the court a voice said, "Here they are,"
And one, "He's almost gone." The sick man heard.
"Oh God, be quick," he moaned. "Only one word.
Keir! Occleve! Let them come. Why don't they come?
Why stop to tell them that?—the devil strike you dumb."

"I'm neither doll nor dead; come in, come in.
Curse you, you women, quick," the sick man flamed.
"I shall be dead before I can begin.
A sick man's womaned-mad, and nursed and damed."
Death had him by the throat; his wrath was tamed.
"Come in," he fumed; "Stop muttering at the door."
The friends came in; a creaking ran across the floor.

"Now, Nick, how goes it, man?" said Occleve. "Oh,"
The dying man replied, "I am dying; past;
Mercy of God, I die, I'm going to go.
But I have much to tell you if I last.
Come near me, Occleve, Keir. I am sinking fast,
And all my kin are coming; there, look there.
All the old long dead Grays are moving in the air.

"It is my Michael that I called you for:
My son, abroad, at school still, over sea.
See if that hag is listening at the door.
No? Shut the door; don't lock it, let it be.
No faith is kept to dying men like me.
I am dipped deep and dying, bankrupt, done;
I leave not even a farthing to my lovely son.

"Neighbours, these many years our children played,
Down in the fields together, down the brook;
Your Mary, Keir, the girl, the bonny maid,
And Occleve's Lion, always at his book;
Them and my Michael: dear, what joy they took
Picking the daffodils; such friends they've been—
My boy and Occleve's boy and Mary Keir for queen.

"I had made plans; but I am done with, I.
Give me the wine. I have to ask you this:
I can leave Michael nothing, and I die.
By all our friendship used to be and is,
Help him, old friends. Don't let my Michael miss
The schooling I've begun. Give him his chance.
He does not know I am ill; I kept him there in France.

"Saving expense; each penny counts. Oh, friends,
Help him another year; help him to take
His full diploma when the training ends,
So that my ruin won't be his. Oh, make
This sacrifice for our old friendship's sake,
And God will pay you; for I see God's hand
Pass in most marvellous ways on souls: I understand

"How just rewards are given for man's deeds
And judgment strikes the soul. The wine there, wine.
Life is the daily thing man never heeds.
It is ablaze with sign and countersign.
Michael will not forget: that son of mine
Is a rare son, my friends; he will go far.
I shall behold his course from where the blessed are."

"Why, Nick," said Occleve, "come, man. Gather hold.
Rouse up. You've given way. If times are bad,
Times must be bettering, master; so be bold;
Lift up your spirit, Nicholas, and be glad.
Michael's as much to me as my dear lad.
I'll see he takes his school." "And I," said Keir.
"Set you no keep by that, but be at rest, my dear.

"We'll see your Michael started on the road."
"But there," said Occleve, "Nick's not going to die.
Out of the ruts, good nag, now; zook the load.
Pull up, man. Death! Death and the fiend defy.
We'll bring the farm round for you, Keir and I.
Put heart at rest and get your health." "Ah, no,"
The sick man faintly answered, "I have got to go."

Still troubled in his mind, the sick man tossed.
"Old friends," he said, "I once had hoped to see
Mary and Michael wed, but fates are crossed,
And Michael starts with nothing left by me.
Still, if he loves her, will you let it be?
So in the grave, maybe, when I am gone,
I'll know my hope fulfilled, and see the plan go on."

"I judge by hearts, not money," answered Keir.
"If Michael suits in that and suits my maid,
I promise you, let Occleve witness here,
He shall be free for me to drive his trade.
Free, ay, and welcome, too. Be not afraid,
I'll stand by Michael as I hope some friend
Will stand beside my girl in case my own life end."

"And I," said Occleve; but the sick man seemed
Still ill at ease. "My friends," he said, "my friends,
Michael may come to all that I have dreamed,
But he's a wild yarn full of broken ends.
So far his life in France has made amends.
God grant he steady so; but girls and drink
Once brought him near to hell, aye, to the very brink.

"There is a running vein of wildness in him:
Wildness and looseness both, which vices make
That woman's task a hard one who would win him:
His life depends upon the course you take.
He is a fiery-mettled colt to break,
And one to curb, one to be curbed, remember."
The dying voice died down, the fire left the ember.

But once again it flamed. "Ah me," he cried;
"Our secret sins take body in our sons,
To haunt our age with what we put aside.
I was a devil for the women once.
He is as I was. Beauty like the sun's;
Within, all water; minded like the moon.
Go now. I sinned. I die. I shall be punished soon."

The two friends tiptoed to the room below.
There, till the woman came to them, they told
Of brave adventures in the long ago,
Ere Nick and they had thought of growing old;
Snipe-shooting in the marshlands in the cold,
Old soldiering days as yeomen, days at fairs,
Days that had sent Nick tired to those self-same chairs.

They vowed to pay the schooling for his son.
They talked of Michael, testing men's report,
How the young student was a lively one,
Handsome and passionate both, and fond of sport,
Eager for fun, quick-witted in retort.
The girls' hearts quick to see him cocking by,
Young April on a blood horse, with a roving eye.

And, as they talked about the lad, Keir asked
If Occleve's son had not, at one time, been
Heartsick for Mary, though with passion masked.
"Ay," Occleve said: "Time was. At seventeen.
It took him hard, it ran his ribs all lean,
All of a summer; but it passed, it died.
Her fancying Michael better touched my Lion's pride."

Mice flickered from the wainscot to the press,
Nibbling at crumbs, rattling to shelter, squeaking.
Each ticking in the clock's womb made life less;
Oil slowly dropped from where the lamp was leaking.
At times the old nurse set the staircase creaking,
Harked to the sleeper's breath, made sure, returned,
Answered the questioning eyes, then wept. The great stars burned.

"Listen," said Occleve, "listen, Rowland. Hark."
"It's Mary, come with Lion," answered Keir;
"They said they'd come together after dark."
He went to door and called "Come in, my dear."
The burning wood log blazed with sudden cheer,
So that a glowing lighted all the room.
His daughter Mary entered from the outer gloom.

The wind had brought the blood into her cheek,
Heightening her beauty, but her great grey eyes
Were troubled with a fear she could not speak.
Firm, scarlet lips she had, not made for lies.
Gentle she seemed, pure-natured, thoughtful, wise,
And when she asked what turn the sickness took,
Her voice's passing pureness on a low note shook.

Young Lion Occleve entered at her side,
A well-built, clever man, unduly grave,
One whose repute already travelled wide
For skill in breeding beasts. His features gave
Promise of brilliant mind, far-seeing, brave,
One who would travel far. His manly grace
Grew wistful when his eyes were turned on Mary's face.

"Tell me," said Mary, "what did doctor say?
How ill is he? What chance of life has he?
The cowman said he couldn't last the day,
And only yesterday he joked with me."
"We must be meek," the nurse said; "such things be."
"There's little hope," said Keir; "he's dying, sinking."
"Dying without his son," the young girl's heart was thinking.

"Does Michael know?" she asked. "Has he been called?"
A slow confusion reddened on the faces,
As when one light neglect leaves friends appalled.
"No time to think," said nurse, "in such like cases."
Old Occleve stooped and fumbled with his laces.
"Let be," he said; "there's always time for sorrow.
He could not come in time; he shall be called to-morrow."

"There is a chance," she cried, "there always is.
Poor Mr. Gray might rally, might live on.
Oh, I must telegraph to tell him this.
Would it were day still and the message gone."
She rose, her breath came fast, her grey eyes shone.
She said, "Come, Lion; see me through the wood.
Michael must know." Keir sighed. "Girl, it will do no good.

"Our friend is on the brink and almost passed."
"All the more need," she said, "for word to go;
Michael could well arrive before the last.
He'd see his father's face at least. I know
The office may be closed; but even so,
Father, I must. Come, Lion." Out they went,
Into the roaring woodland where the saplings bent.

Like breakers of the sea the leafless branches
Swished, bowing down, rolling like water, roaring
Like the sea's welcome when the clipper launches
And full affronted tideways call to warring.
Daffodils glimmered underfoot, the flooring
Of the earthy woodland smelt like torn-up moss;
Stones in the path showed white, and rabbits ran across.

They climbed the rise and struck into the ride,
Talking of death, while Lion, sick at heart,
Thought of the woman walking at his side,
And as he talked his spirit stood apart,
Old passion for her made his being smart,
Rankling within. Her thought for Michael ran
Like glory and like poison through his inner man.

"This will break Michael's heart," he said at length.
"Poor Michael," she replied; "they wasted hours.
He loved his father so. God give him strength.
This is a cruel thing this life of ours."
The windy woodland glimmered with shut flowers,
White wood anemones that the wind blew down.
The valley opened wide beyond the starry town.

"Ten," clanged out of the belfry. Lion stayed,
One hand upon a many-carven bole.
"Mary," he said. "Dear, my beloved maid,
I love you, dear one, from my very soul."
Her beauty in the dusk destroyed control.
"Mary, my dear, I've loved you all these years."
"Oh, Lion, no," she murmured, choking back her tears.

"I love you," he repeated. "Five years since
This thing began between us: every day,
Oh sweet, the thought of you has made me wince;
The thought of you, my sweet, the look, the way.
It's only you, whether I work or pray,
You and the hope of you, sweet you, dear you.
I never spoke before; now it has broken through.

"Oh, my belovéd, can you care for me?"
She shook her head. "Oh, hush, oh, Lion dear,
Don't speak of love, for it can never be
Between us two, never, however near.
Come on, my friend, we must not linger here."
White to the lips she spoke; he saw her face
White in the darkness by him in the windy place.

"Mary, in time you could, perhaps," he pleaded.
"No," she replied, "no, Lion; never, no."
Over the stars the boughs burst and receded.
The nobleness of Love comes in Love's woe.
"God bless you then, belovéd, let us go.
Come on," he said, "and if I gave you pain,
Forget it, dear; be sure I never will again."

They stepped together down the ride, their feet
Slipped on loose stones. Little was said; his fate,
Staked on a kingly cast, had met defeat.
Nothing remained except to endure and wait.
She was still wonderful, and life still great.
Great in that bitter instant side by side,
Hallowed by thoughts of death there in the blinded ride.

He heard her breathing by him, saw her face
Dim, looking straight ahead; her feet by his
Kept time beside him, giving life a grace;
Night made the moment full of mysteries.
"You are beautiful," he thought; "and life is this:
Walking a windy night while men are dying,
To cry for one to come, and none to heed our crying."

"Mary," he said, "are you in love with him,
With Michael? Tell me. We are friends, we three."
They paused to face each other in the dim.
"Tell me," he urged. "Yes, Lion," answered she;
"I love him, but he does not care for me.
I trust your generous mind, dear; now you know,
You, who have been my brother, how our fortunes go.

"Now come; the message waits." The heavens cleared,
Cleared, and were starry as they trod the ride.
Chequered by tossing boughs the moon appeared;
A whistling reached them from the Hall House side;
Climbing, the whistler came. A brown owl cried.
The whistler paused to answer, sending far
That haunting, hunting note. The echoes laughed Aha!

Something about the calling made them start.
Again the owl note laughed; the ringing cry
Made the blood quicken within Mary's heart.
Like a dead leaf a brown owl floated by.
"Michael?" said Lion. "Hush." An owl's reply
Came down the wind; they waited; then the man,
Content, resumed his walk, a merry song began.

"Michael," they cried together. "Michael, you?"
"Who calls?" the singer answered. "Where away?
Is that you, Mary?" Then with glad halloo
The singer ran to meet them on the way.
It was their Michael; in the moonlight grey,
They made warm welcome; under tossing boughs,
They met and told the fate darkening Ryemeadows House.

As they returned at speed their comrade spoke
Strangely and lightly of his coming home,
Saying that leaving France had been a joke,
But that events now proved him wise to come.
Down the steep 'scarpment to the house they clomb,
And Michael faltered in his pace; they heard
How dumb rebellion in the much-wronged cattle stirred.

And as they came, high, from the sick man's room,
Old Gray burst out a-singing of the light
Streaming upon him from the outer gloom,
As his eyes dying gave him mental sight.
"Triumphing swords," he carolled, "in the bright;
Oh fire, Oh beauty fire," and fell back dead.
Occleve took Michael up to kneel beside the bed.

So the night passed; the noisy wind went down;
The half-burnt moon her starry trackway rode.
Then the first fire was lighted in the town,
And the first carter stacked his early load.
Upon the farm's drawn blinds the morning glowed;
And down the valley, with little clucks and trills,
The dancing waters danced by dancing daffodils.

II.

They buried Gray; his gear was sold; his farm
Passed to another tenant. Thus men go;
The dropped sword passes to another arm,
And different waters in the river flow.
His two old faithful friends let Michael know
His father's ruin and their promise. Keir
Brought him to stay at Foxholes till a path was clear.

There, when the sale was over, all three met
To talk about the future and to find
Upon what project Michael's heart was set.
Gentle the two old men were, thoughtful, kind.
They urged the youth to speak his inmost mind,
For they would compass what he chose; they told
How he might end his training; they would find the gold.

"Thanks, but I cannot," Michael said. He smiled.
"Cannot. They've kicked me out. I've been expelled;
Kicked out for good and all for being wild.
They stopped our evening leave, and I rebelled.
I am a gentle soul until compelled,
And then I put my ears back. The old fool
Said that my longer presence might inflame the school.

"And I am glad, for I have had my fill
Of farming by the book with those old fools,
Exhausted talkatives whose blood is still,
Who strive to bind a living man with rules.
This fettered kind of life, these laws, these schools,
These codes, these checks, what are they but the clogs
Made by collected sheep to mortify the dogs?

"And I have had enough of them; and now
I make an end of them. I want to go
Somewhere where man has never used a plough,
Nor ever read a book; where clean winds blow,
And passionate blood is not its owner's foe,
And land is for the asking for it. There
Man can create a life and have the open air.

"The River Plate's the country. There, I know,
A man like me can thrive. There, on the range,
The cattle pass like tides; they ebb and flow,
And life is changeless in unending change,
And one can ride all day, and all day strange,
Strange, never trodden, fenceless, waiting there,
To feed unending cattle for the men who dare.

"There I should have a chance; this land's too old."
Old Occleve grunted at the young man's mood;
Keir, who was losing money, thought him bold,
And thought the scheme for emigration good.
He said that, if he wished to go, he should.
South to the pampas, there to learn the trade.
Old Occleve thought it mad, but no objection made.

So it was settled that the lad should start,
A place was found for him, a berth was taken;
And Michael's beauty plucked at Mary's heart,
And now the fabric of their lives was shaken:
For now the hour's nearness made love waken
In Michael's heart for Mary. Now Time's guile
Granted her passionate prayer, nor let her see his smile.

Granted his greatest gifts; a night time came
When the two walking down the water learned
That life till then had only been a name;
Love had unsealed their spirits: they discerned.
Mutely, at moth time there, their spirits yearned.
"I shall be gone three years, dear soul," he said.
"Dear, will you wait for me?" "I will," replied the maid.

So troth was pledged between them. Keir received
Michael as Mary's suitor, feeling sure
That the lad's fortunes would be soon retrieved,
Having a woman's promise as a lure.
The three years' wait would teach them to endure.
He bade them love and prosper and be glad.
And fast the day drew near that was to take the lad.

Cowslips had come along the bubbling brook,
Cowslips and oxlips rare, and in the wood
The many-blossomed stalks of bluebells shook;
The outward beauty fed their mental mood.
Thought of the parting stabbed her as he wooed,
Walking the brook with her, and day by day,
The precious fortnight's grace dropped, wasted, slipped away.

Till only one clear day remained to her:
One whole clear precious day, before he sailed,
Some forty hours, no more, to minister
To months of bleakness before which she quailed.
Mist rose along the brook; the corncrake railed;
Dim red the sunset burned. He bade her come
Into the wood with him; they went, the night came dumb.

Still as high June, the very water's noise
Seemed but a breathing of the earth; the flowers
Stood in the dim like souls without a voice.
The wood's conspiracy of occult powers
Drew all about them, and for hours on hours
No murmur shook the oaks, the stars did house
Their lights like lamps upon those never-moving boughs.

Under their feet the woodland sloped away
Down to the valley, where the farmhouse lights
Were sparks in the expanse the moon made gray.
June's very breast was bare this night of nights.
Moths blundered up against them, grays and whites
Moved on the darkness where the moths were out,
Nosing for sticky sweet with trembling uncurled snout.

But all this beauty was but music played,
While the high pageant of their hearts prepared.
A spirit thrilled between them, man to maid,
Mind flowed in mind, the inner heart was bared,
They needed not to tell how much each cared;
All the soul's strength was at the other's soul.
Flesh was away awhile, a glory made them whole.

Nothing was said by them; they understood,
They searched each other's eyes without a sound,
Alone with moonlight in the heart of the wood,
Knowing the stars and all the soul of the ground.
"Mary," he murmured. "Come." His arms went round,
A white moth glimmered by, the woods were hushed;
The rose at Mary's bosom dropped its petals, crushed.

No word profaned the peace of that glad giving,
But the warm dimness of the night stood still,
Drawing all beauty to the point of living,
There in the beech-tree's shadow on the hill.
Spirit to spirit murmured; mingling will
Made them one being; Time's decaying thought
Fell from them like a rag; it was the soul they sought.

The moonlight found an opening in the boughs;
It entered in, it filled that sacred place
With consecration on the throbbing brows;
It came with benediction and with grace.
A whispering came from face to yearning face:
"Beloved, will you wait for me?" "My own."
"I shall be gone three years, you will be left alone;

"You'll trust and wait for me?" "Yes, yes," she sighed;
She would wait any term of years, all time—
So faithful to first love these souls abide,
Carrying a man's soul with them as they climb.
Life was all flower to them; the church bells' chime
Rang out the burning hour ere they had sealed
Love's charter there below the June sky's starry field.

Sweetly the church bells' music reached the wood,
Chiming an old slow tune of some old hymn,
Calling them back to life from where they stood
Under the moonlit beech-tree grey and dim.
"Mary," he murmured; pressing close to him,
Her kiss came on the gift he gave her there,
A silken scarf that bore her name worked in his hair.

But still the two affixed their hands and seals
To a life compact witnessed by the sky,
Where the great planets drove their glittering wheels,
Bringing conflicting fate, making men die.
They loved, and she would wait, and he would try.
"Oh, beauty of my love," "My lovely man,"
So beauty made them noble for their little span.

Time cannot pause, however dear the wooer;
The moon declined, the sunrise came, the hours,
Left to the lovers, dwindled swiftly fewer,
Even as the seeds from dandelion-flowers
Blow, one by one, until the bare stalk cowers,
And the June grass grows over; even so
Daffodil-picker Time took from their lives the glow,

Stole their last walk along the three green fields,
Their latest hour together; he took, he stole
The white contentment that a true love yields;
He took the triumph out of Mary's soul.
Now she must lie awake and blow the coal
Of sorrow of heart. The parting hour came;
They kissed their last good-bye, murmuring the other's name.

Then the flag waved, the engine snorted, then
Slowly the couplings tautened, and the train
Moved, bearing off from her her man of men;
She looked towards its going blind with pain.
Her father turned and drove her home again.
It was a different home. Awhile she tried
To cook the dinner there, but flung her down and cried.

Then in the dusk she wandered down the brook,
Treading again the trackway trod of old,
When she could hold her loved one in a look.
The night was all unlike those nights of gold.
Michael was gone, and all the April old,
Withered and hidden. Life was full of ills;
She flung her down and cried i' the withered daffodils.

THE DAFFODIL FIELDS

III.

The steaming river loitered like old blood
On which the tugboat bearing Michael beat,
Past whitened horse bones sticking in the mud.
The reed stems looked like metal in the heat.
Then the banks fell away, and there were neat,
Red herds of sullen cattle drifting slow.
A fish leaped, making rings, making the dead blood flow.

Wormed hard-wood piles were driv'n in the river bank,
The steamer threshed alongside with sick screws
Churning the mud below her till it stank;
Big gassy butcher-bubbles burst on the ooze.
There Michael went ashore; as glad to lose
One not a native there, the Gauchos flung
His broken gear ashore, one waved, a bell was rung.

The bowfast was cast off, the screw revolved,
Making a bloodier bubbling; rattling rope
Fell to the hatch, the engine's tune resolved
Into its steadier beat of rise and slope;
The steamer went her way; and Michael's hope
Died as she lessened; he was there alone.
The lowing of the cattle made a gradual moan.

He thought of Mary, but the thought was dim;
That was another life, lived long before.
His mind was in new worlds which altered him.
The startling present left no room for more.
The sullen river lipped, the sky, the shore
Were vaster than of old, and lonely, lonely.
Sky and low hills of grass and moaning cattle only.

But for a hut bestrewn with skulls of beeves,
Round which the flies danced, where an Indian girl
Bleared at him from her eyes' ophthalmic eaves,
Grinning a welcome; with a throaty skirl,
She offered him herself; but he, the churl,
Stared till she thought him fool; she turned, she sat,
Scratched in her short, black hair, chewed a cigar-end, spat.

Up, on the rise, the cattle bunched; the bulls
Drew to the front with menace, pawing bold,
Snatching the grass-roots out with sudden pulls,
The distant cattle raised their heads; the wold
Grew dusty at the top; a waggon rolled,
Drawn by a bickering team of mules whose eyes
Were yellow like their teeth and bared and full of vice.

Down to the jetty came the jingling team,
An Irish cowboy driving, while a Greek
Beside him urged the mules with blow and scream.
They cheered the Indian girl and stopped to speak.
Then lifting her aloft they kissed her cheek,
Calling to Michael to be quick aboard,
Or they (they said) would fall from virtue, by the Lord.

So Michael climbed aboard, and all day long
He drove the cattle range, rise after rise,
Dotted with limber shorthorns grazing strong,
Cropping sweet-tasted pasture, switching flies;
Dull trouble brooded in their smoky eyes.
Some horsemen watched them. As the sun went down,
The waggon reached the estancia builded like a town.

With wide corráles where the horses squealed,
Biting and lashing out; some half-wild hounds
Gnawed at the cowbones littered on the field,
Or made the stallions stretch their picket bounds.
Some hides were drying; horsemen came from rounds,
Unsaddled stiff, and turned their mounts to feed,
And then brewed bitter drink and sucked it through a reed.

The Irishman removed his pipe and spoke:
"You take a fool's advice," he said. "Return.
Go back where you belong before you're broke;
You'll spoil more clothes at this job than you'll earn;
It's living death, and when you die you'll burn:
Body and soul it takes you. Quit it. No?
Don't say I never told you, then. Amigos. Ho.

"Here comes a Gringo; make him pay his shot.
Pay up your footing, Michael; rum's the word,
It suits my genius, and I need a lot."
So the great cauldron full was mixed and stirred.
And all night long the startled cattle heard
Shouting and shooting, and the moon beheld
Mobs of dim, struggling men, who fired guns and yelled

That they were Abel Brown just come to town,
Michael among them. By a bonfire some
Betted on red and black for money down,
Snatching their clinking winnings, eager, dumb.
Some danced unclad, rubbing their heads with rum.
The gray dawn, bringing beauty to the skies,
Saw Michael stretched among them, far too drunk to rise.

His footing paid, he joined the living-shed,
Lined with rude bunks and set with trestles: there
He, like the other ranchers, slept and fed,
Save when the staff encamped in open air,
Rounding the herd for branding. Rude and bare
That barrack was; men littered it about
With saddles, blankets blue, old headstalls, many a clout

Torn off to wipe a knife or clean a gun,
Tin dishes, sailors' hookpots, all the mess
Made where the outdoor work is never done
And every cleaning makes the sleeping less.
Men came from work too tired to undress,
And slept all standing like the trooper's horse;
Then with the sun they rose to ride the burning course,

Whacking the shipment cattle into pen,
Where, in the dust, among the stink of burning,
The half-mad heifers bolted from the men,
And tossing horns arose and hoofs were churning,
A lover there had little time for yearning;
But all day long, cursing the flies and heat,
Michael was handling steers on horseback till his feet

Gave on dismounting. All day long he rode,
Then, when the darkness came, his mates and he
Entered dog-tired to the rude abode
And ate their meat and sucked their bitter tea,
And rolled themselves in rugs and slept. The sea
Could not make men more drowsy; like the dead,
They lay under the lamp while the mosquitos fed.

There was no time to think of Mary, none;
For when the work relaxed, the time for thought
Was broken up by men demanding fun:
Cards, or a well-kept ring while someone fought,
Or songs and dancing; or a case was bought
Of white Brazilian rum, and songs and cheers
And shots and oaths rang loud upon the twitching ears

Of the hobbled horses hopping to their feed.
So violent images displaced the rose
In Michael's spirit; soon he took the lead;
None was more apt than he for games or blows.
Even as the battle-seeking bantam crows,
So crowed the cockerel of his mind to feel
Life's bonds removed and blood quick in him toe to heel.

But sometimes when her letters came to him,
Full of wise tenderness and maiden mind,
He felt that he had let his clearness dim;
The riot with the cowboys seemed unkind
To that far faithful heart; he could not find
Peace in the thought of her; he found no spur
To instant upright action in his love for her.

She faded to the memory of a kiss,
There in the rough life among foreign faces;
Love cannot live where leisure never is;
He could not write to her from savage places,
Where drunken mates were betting on the aces,
And rum went round and smutty songs were lifted.
He would not raise her banner against that; he drifted,

Ceasing, in time, to write, ceasing to think,
But happy in the wild life to the bone;
The riding in vast space, the songs, the drink,
Some careless heart beside him like his own,
The racing and the fights, the ease unknown
In older, soberer lands; his young blood thrilled.
The pampas seemed his own, his cup of joy was filled.

And one day, riding far after strayed horses,
He rode beyond the ranges to a land
Broken and made most green by watercourses,
Which served as strayline to the neighbouring brand.
A house stood near the brook; he stayed his hand,
Seeing a woman there, whose great eyes burned,
So that he could not choose but follow when she turned.

After that day he often rode to see
That woman at the peach farm near the brook,
And passionate love between them came to be
Ere many days. Their fill of love they took;
And even as the blank leaves of a book
The days went over Mary, day by day,
Blank as the last, was turned, endured, passed, turned away.

Spring came again greening the hawthorn buds;
The shaking flowers, new-blossomed, seemed the same,
And April put her riot in young bloods;
The jays flapped in the larch clump like blue flame.
She did not care; his letter never came.
Silent she went, nursing the grief that kills,
And Lion watched her pass among the daffodils.

IV.

Time passed, but still no letter came; she ceased,
Almost, to hope, but never to expect.
The June moon came which had beheld love's feast,
Then waned, like it; the meadow-grass was flecked
With moon-daisies, which died; little she recked
Of change in outward things, she did not change;
Her heart still knew one star, one hope, it did not range,

Like to the watery hearts of tidal men,
Swayed by all moons of beauty; she was firm,
When most convinced of misery firmest then.
She held a light not subject to the worm.
The pageant of the summer ran its term;
The last stack came to staddle from the wain;
The snow fell, the snow thawed, the year began again.

With the wet glistening gold of celandines,
And snowdrops pushing from the withered grass,
Before the bud upon the hawthorn greens,
Or blackbirds go to building; but, alas!
No spring within her bosom came to pass.
"You're going like a ghost," her father said;
"Now put him out of mind, and be my prudent maid."

It was an April morning brisk with wind,
She wandered out along the brook sick-hearted,
Picking the daffodils where the water dinned,
While overhead the first-come swallow darted.
There, at the place where all the passion started,
Where love first knocked about her maiden heart,
Young Lion Occleve hailed her, calling her apart

To see his tulips at The Roughs, and take
A spray of flowering currant; so she went.
It is a bitter moment, when hearts ache,
To see the loved unhappy; his intent
Was but to try to comfort her; he meant
To show her that he knew her heart's despair,
And that his own heart bled to see her wretched there.

So, as they talked, he asked her, had she heard
From Michael lately? No, she had not; she
Had been a great while now, without a word.
"No news is always good news," answered he.
"You know," he said, "how much you mean to me;
You've always been the queen. Oh, if I could
Do anything to help, my dear, you know I would."

"Nothing," she said, much touched. "But you believe—
You still believe in him?" "Why, yes," he said.
Lie though it was he did not dare deceive
The all too cruel faith within the maid.
"That ranching is a wild and lonely trade,
Far from all posts; it may be hard to send;
All puzzling things like this prove simple in the end.

"We should have heard if he were ill or dead.
Keep a good heart. Now come"; he led the way
Beyond the barton to the calving-shed,
Where, on a strawy litter topped with hay,
A double-pedigree prize bull-calf lay.
"Near three weeks old," he said, "the Wrekin's pet;
Come up, now, son, come up; you haven't seen him yet.

"We have done well," he added, "with the stock,
But this one, if he lives, will make a name."
The bull-calf gambolled with his tail acock,
Then shyly nosed towards them, scared but tame;
His troublous eyes were sulky with blue flame.
Softly he tip-toed, shying at a touch;
He nosed, his breath came sweet, his pale tongue curled to clutch.

They rubbed his head, and Mary went her way,
Counting the dreary time, the dreary beat
Of dreary minutes dragging through the day;
Time crawled across her life with leaden feet;
There still remained a year before her sweet
Would come to claim her; surely he would come;
Meanwhile there was the year, her weakening father, home.

Home with its deadly round, with all its setting,
Things, rooms, and fields and flowers to sting, to burn
With memories of the love time past forgetting
Ere absence made her very being yearn.
"My love, be quick," she moaned, "Return, return;
Come when the three years end, oh, my dear soul,
It's bitter, wanting you." The lonely nights took toll,

Putting a sadness where the beauty was,
Taking a lustre from the hair; the days
Saw each a sadder image in the glass.
And when December came, fouling the ways,
And ashless beech-logs made a Christmas blaze,
Some talk of Michael came; a rumour ran,
Someone had called him "wild" to some returning man,

Who, travelling through that cattle-range, had heard
Nothing more sure than this; but this he told
At second-hand upon a cowboy's word.
It struck on Mary's heart and turned her cold.
That winter was an age which made her old.
"But soon," she thought, "soon the third year will end;
March, April, May, and June, then I shall see my friend.

"He promised he would come; he will not fail.
Oh, Michael, my beloved man, come soon;
Stay not to make a home for me, but sail.
Love and the hour will put the world in tune.
You in my life for always is the boon
I ask from life—we two, together, lovers."
So leaden time went by who eats things and discovers.

Then, in the winds of March, her father rode,
Hunting the Welland country on Black Ned;
The tenor cry gave tongue past Clencher's Lode,
And on he galloped, giving the nag his head;
Then, at the brook, he fell, was picked up dead.
Hounds were whipped off; men muttered with one breath,
"We knew that hard-mouthed brute would some day be his death."

They bore his body on a hurdle home;
Then came the burial, then the sadder day
When the peaked lawyer entered like a gnome,
With word to quit and lists of debts to pay.
There was a sale; the Foxholes passed away
To strangers, who discussed the points of cows,
Where love had put such glory on the lovers' brows.

Kind Lion Occleve helped the maid's affairs.
Her sorrow brought him much beside her; he
Caused her to settle, having stilled her cares,
In the long cottage under Spital Gree.
He had no hope that she would love him; she
Still waited for her lover, but her eyes
Thanked Lion to the soul; he made the look suffice.

By this the yearling bull-calf had so grown
That all men talked of him; mighty he grew,
Huge-shouldered, scaled above a hundred stone,
With deep chest many-wrinkled with great thew,
Plain-loined and playful-eyed; the Occleves knew
That he surpassed his pasture; breeders came
From far to see this bull; he brought the Occleves fame.

Till a meat-breeding rancher on the plains
Where Michael wasted, sent to buy the beast,
Meaning to cross his cows with heavier strains
Until his yield of meat and bone increased.
He paid a mighty price; the yearling ceased
To be the wonder of the countryside.
He sailed in Lion's charge, south, to the Plate's red tide.

There Lion landed with the bull, and there
The great beast raised his head and bellowed loud,
Challenging that expanse and that new air;
Trembling, but full of wrath and thunder-browed,
Far from the daffodil fields and friends, but proud,
His wild eye kindled at the great expanse.
Two scraps of Shropshire life they stood there; their advance

Was slow along the well-grassed cattle land,
But at the last an end was made; the brute
Ate his last bread crust from his master's hand,
And snuffed the foreign herd and stamped his foot;
Steers on the swelling ranges gave salute.
The great bull bellowed back and Lion turned;
His task was now to find where Michael lived; he learned

The farm's direction, and with heavy mind,
Thinking of Mary and her sorrow, rode,
Leaving the offspring of his fields behind.
A last time in his ears the great bull lowed.
Then, shaking up his horse, the young man glowed
To see the unfenced pampas opening out
Grass that makes old earth sing and all the valleys shout.

At sunset on the second day he came
To that white cabin in the peach-tree plot
Where Michael lived; they met, the Shropshire name
Rang trebly dear in that outlandish spot.
Old memories swam up dear, old joys forgot,
Old friends, were real again; but Mary's woe
Came into Lion's mind, and Michael vexed him so,

Talking with careless freshness, side by side
With that dark Spanish beauty who had won,
As though no heart-broke woman, heavy-eyed,
Mourned for him over sea, as though the sun
Shone but to light his steps to love and fun,
While she, that golden and beloved soul,
Worth ten of him, lay wasting like an unlit coal.

So supper passed; the meat in Lion's gorge
Stuck at the last, he could not bide that face.
The idle laughter on it plied the forge
Where hate was smithying tools; the jokes, the place,
Wrought him to wrath; he could not stay for grace.
The tin mug full of red wine spilled and fell.
He kicked his stool aside with "Michael, this is hell.

"Come out into the night and talk to me."
The young man lit a cigarette and followed;
The stars seemed trembling at a brink to see;
A little ghostly white-owl stooped and holloed.
Beside the stake-fence Lion stopped and swallowed,
While all the wrath within him made him gray.
Michael stood still and smoked, and flicked his ash away.

"Well, Lion," Michael said, "men make mistakes,
And then regret them; and an early flame
Is frequently the worst mistake man makes.
I did not seek this passion, but it came.
Love happens so in life. Well? Who's to blame?
You'll say I've broken Mary's heart; the heart
Is not the whole of life, but an inferior part,

"Useful for some few years and then a curse.
Nerves should be stronger. You have come to say
The three-year term is up; so much the worse.
I cannot meet the bill; I cannot pay.
I would not if I could. Men change. To-day
I know that that first choice, however sweet,
Was wrong and a mistake; it would have meant defeat,

"Ruin and misery to us both. Let be.
You say I should have told her this? Perhaps.
You try to make a loving woman see
That the warm link which holds you to her snaps.
Neglect is deadlier than the thunder-claps.
Yet she is bright and I am water. Well,
I did not make myself; this life is often hell.

"Judge if you must, but understand it first.
We are old friends, and townsmen, Shropshire born,
Under the Wrekin. You believe the worst.
You have no knowledge how the heart is torn,
Trying for duty up against the thorn.
Now say I've broken Mary's heart: begin.
Break hers, or hers and mine, which were the greater sin?"

"Michael," said Lion, "I have heard you. Now
Listen to me. Three years ago you made
With a most noble soul a certain vow.
Now you reject it, saying that you played.
She did not think so, Michael, she has stayed,
Eating her heart out for a line, a word,
News that you were not dead; news that she never heard.

"Not once, after the first. She has held firm
To what you counted pastime; she has wept
Life, day by weary day throughout the term,
While her heart sickened and the clock-hand crept.
While you, you with your woman here, have kept
Holiday, feasting; you are fat; you smile.
You have had love and laughter all the ghastly while.

"I shall be back in England six weeks hence,
Standing with your poor Mary face to face;
Far from a pleasant moment, but intense.
I shall be asked to tell her of this place.
And she will eye me hard and hope for grace,
Some little crumb of comfort while I tell;
And every word will burn like a red spark from hell,

"That you have done with her, that you are living
Here with another woman; that you care
Nought for the pain you've given and are giving;
That all your lover's vows were empty air.
This I must tell: thus I shall burn her bare,
Burn out all hope, all comfort, every crumb,
End it, and watch her whiten, hopeless, tearless, dumb.

"Or do I judge you wrongly?" He was still.
The cigarette-end glowed and dimmed with ash;
A preying night bird whimpered on the hill.
Michael said "Ah!" and fingered with his sash,
Then stilled. The night was still; there came no flash
Of sudden passion bursting. All was still;
A lonely water gurgled like a whip-poor-will.

"Now I must go," said Lion; "where's the horse?"
"There," said his friend; "I'll set you on your way."
They caught and rode, both silent, while remorse
Worked in each heart, though neither would betray
What he was feeling, and the moon came gray,
Then burned into an opal white and great,
Silvering the downs of grass where these two travelled late,

Thinking of English fields which that moon saw,
Fields full of quiet beauty lying hushed
At midnight in the moment full of awe,
When the red fox comes creeping, dewy-brushed.
But neither spoke; they rode; the horses rushed,
Scattering the great clods skywards with such thrills
As colts in April feel there in the daffodils.

V.

The river brimming full was silvered over
By moonlight at the ford; the river bank
Smelt of bruised clote buds and of yellow clover.
Nosing the gleaming dark the horses drank,
Drooping and dripping as the reins fell lank;
The men drooped too; the stars in heaven drooped;
Rank after hurrying rank the silver water trooped

In ceaseless bright procession past the shallows,
Talking its quick inconsequence. The friends,
Warmed by the gallop on the unfenced fallows,
Felt it a kindlier thing to make amends.
"A jolly burst," said Michael; "here it ends.
Your way lies straight beyond the water. There.
Watch for the lights, and keep those two stars as they bear."

Something august was quick in all that sky,
Wheeling in multitudinous march with fire;
The falling of the wind brought it more nigh,
They felt the earth take solace and respire;
The horses shifted foothold in the mire,
Splashing and making eddies. Lion spoke:
"Do you remember riding past the haunted oak

"That Christmas Eve, when all the bells were ringing,
So that we picked out seven churches' bells,
Ringing the night, and people carol-singing?
It hummed and died away and rose in swells
Like a sea breaking. We have been through hells
Since then, we two, and now this being here
Brings all that Christmas back, and makes it strangely near."

"Yes," Michael answered, "they were happy times,
Riding beyond there; but a man needs change;
I know what they connote, those Christmas chimes,
Fudge in the heart, and pudding in the grange.
It stifles me all that; I need the range,
Like this before us, open to the sky;
There every wing is clipped, but here a man can fly."

"Ah," said his friend, "man only flies in youth,
A few short years at most, until he finds
That even quiet is a form of truth,
And all the rest a coloured rag that blinds.
Life offers nothing but contented minds.
Some day you'll know it, Michael. I am grieved
That Mary's heart will pay until I am believed."

There was a silence while the water dripped
From the raised muzzles champing on the steel.
Flogging the crannied banks the water lipped.
Night up above them turned her starry wheel;
And each man feared to let the other feel
How much he felt; they fenced; they put up bars.
The moon made heaven pale among the withering stars.

"Michael," said Lion, "why should we two part?
Ride on with me; or shall we both return,
Make preparation, and to-morrow start,
And travel home together? You would learn
How much the people long to see you; turn.
We will ride back and say good-bye, and then
Sail, and see home again, and see the Shropshire men,

"And see the old Shropshire mountain and the fair,
Full of drunk Welshmen bringing mountain ewes;
And partridge shooting would be starting there."
Michael hung down his head and seemed to choose.
The horses churned fresh footing in the ooze.
Then Michael asked if Tom were still alive,
Old Tom, who fought the Welshman under Upton Drive,

For nineteen rounds, on grass, with the bare hands?
"Shaky," said Lion, "living still, but weak;
Almost past speaking, but he understands."
"And old Shon Shones we teased so with the leek?"
"Dead." "When?" "December." Michael did not speak,
But muttered "Old Jones dead." A minute passed.
"What came to little Sue, his girl," he said at last.

"Got into trouble with a man and died;
Her sister keeps the child." His hearer stirred.
"Dead, too? She was a pretty girl," he sighed,
"A graceful pretty creature, like a bird.
What is the child?" "A boy. Her sister heard
Too late to help; poor Susan died; the man
None knew who he could be, but many rumours ran."

"Ah," Michael said. The horses tossed their heads;
A little wind arising struck in chill;
"Time," he began, "that we were in our beds."
A distant heifer challenged from the hill,
Scraped at the earth with's forefoot and was still.
"Come with me," Lion pleaded. Michael grinned;
He turned his splashing horse, and prophesied a wind.

"So long," he said, and "Kind of you to call.
Straight on, and watch the stars"; his horse's feet
Trampled the firmer foothold, ending all.
He flung behind no message to his sweet,
No other word to Lion; the dull beat
Of his horse's trample drummed upon the trail;
Lion could watch him drooping in the moonlight pale,

Drooping and lessening; half expectant still
That he would turn and greet him; but no sound
Came, save the lonely water's whippoorwill
And the going horse hoofs dying on the ground.
"Michael," he cried, "Michael!" A lonely mound
Beyond the water gave him back the cry.
"That's at an end," he said, "and I have failed her—I."

Soon the far hoof-beats died, save for a stir
Half heard, then lost, then still, then heard again.
A quickening rhythm showed he plied the spur.
Then a vast breathing silence took the plain.
The moon was like a soul within the brain
Of the great sleeping world; silent she rode
The water talked, talked, talked; it trembled as it flowed.

A moment Lion thought to ride in chase.
He turned, then turned again, knowing his friend.
He forded through with death upon his face,
And rode the plain that seemed never to end.
Clumps of pale cattle nosed the thing unkenned,
Riding the night; out of the night they rose,
Snuffing with outstretched heads, stamping with surly lows,

Till he was threading through a crowd, a sea
Of curious shorthorns backing as he came,
Barring his path, but shifting warily;
He slapped the hairy flanks of the more tame.
Unreal the ghostly cattle lumbered lame.
His horse kept at an even pace; the cows
Broke right and left like waves before advancing bows.

Lonely the pampas seemed amid that herd.
The thought of Mary's sorrow pricked him sore;
He brought no comfort for her, not a word;
He would not ease her pain, but bring her more.
The long miles dropped behind; lights rose before,
Lights and the seaport and the briny air;
And so he sailed for home to comfort Mary there.

* * * * *

When Mary knew the worst she only sighed,
Looked hard at Lion's face, and sat quite still,
White to the lips, but stern and stony-eyed,
Beaten by life in all things but the will.
Though the blow struck her hard it did not kill.
She rallied on herself, a new life bloomed
Out of the ashy heart where Michael lay entombed.

And more than this: for Lion touched a sense
That he, the honest humdrum man, was more
Than he by whom the glory and the offence
Came to her life three bitter years before.
This was a treason in her being's core;
It smouldered there; meanwhile as two good friends
They met at autumn dusks and winter daylight-ends.

And once, after long twilight talk, he broke
His strong restraint upon his passion for her,
And burningly, most like a man he spoke,
Until her pity almost overbore her.
It could not be, she said; her pity tore her;
But still it could not be, though this was pain.
Then on a frosty night they met and spoke again.

And then he wooed again, clutching her hands,
Calling the maid his mind, his heart, his soul,
Saying that God had linked their lives in bands
When the worm Life first started from the goal;
That they were linked together, past control,
Linked from all time, could she but pity; she
Pitied him from the soul, but said it could not be.

"Mary," he asked, "you cannot love me? No?"
"No," she replied; "would God I could, my dear."
"God bless you then," he answered, "I must go,
Go over sea to get away from here,
I cannot think of work when you are near;
My whole life falls to pieces; it must end.
This meeting now must be 'good-bye,' beloved friend."

White-lipped she listened, then with failing breath,
She asked for yet a little time; her face
Was even as that of one condemned to death.
She asked for yet another three months' grace,
Asked it, as Lion inly knew, in case
Michael should still return; and "Yes" said he,
"I'll wait three months for you, beloved; let it be."

Slowly the three months dragged: no Michael came.
March brought the daffodils and set them shaking.
April was quick in Nature like green flame;
May came with dog-rose buds, and corncrakes craking,
Then dwindled like her blossom; June was breaking.
"Mary," said Lion, "can you answer now?"
White like a ghost she stood, he long remembered how.

Wild-eyed and white, and trembling like a leaf,
She gave her answer, "Yes"; she gave her lips,
Cold as a corpse's to the kiss of grief,
Shuddering at him as if his touch were whips.
Then her best nature, struggling to eclipse
This shrinking self, made speech; she jested there;
They searched each other's eyes, and both souls saw despair.

So the first passed, and after that began
A happier time: she could not choose but praise
That recognition of her in the man
Striving to salve her pride in myriad ways;
He was a gentle lover: gentle days
Passed like a music after tragic scenes;
Her heart gave thanks for that; but still the might-have-beens

Haunted her inner spirit day and night,
And often in his kiss the memory came
Of Michael's face above her, passionate, white,
His lips at her lips murmuring her name.
Then she would suffer sleepless, sick with shame,
And struggle with her weakness. She had vowed
To give herself to Lion; she was true and proud.

He should not have a woman sick with ghosts,
But one firm-minded to be his; so time
Passed one by one the summer's marking posts,
The dog-rose and the foxglove and the lime.
Then on a day the church-bells rang a chime.
Men fired the bells till all the valley filled
With bell-noise from the belfry where the jackdaws build.

Lion and she were married; home they went,
Home to The Roughs as man and wife; the news
Was printed in the paper. Mary sent
A copy out to Michael. Now we lose
Sight of her for a time, and the great dews
Fall, and the harvest-moon grows red and fills
Over the barren fields where March brings daffodils.

VI.

The rider lingered at the fence a moment,
Tossed out the pack to Michael, whistling low,
Then rode, waving his hand, without more comment,
Down the vast gray-green pampas sloping slow.
Michael's last news had come so long ago,
He wondered who had written now; the hand
Thrilled him with vague alarm, it brought him to a stand.

He opened it with one eye on the hut,
Lest she within were watching him, but she
Was combing out her hair, the door was shut,
The green sun-shutters closed, she could not see.
Out fell the love-tryst handkerchief which he
Had had embroidered with his name for her;
It had been dearly kept, it smelt of lavender.

Something remained: a paper, crossed with blue,
Where he should read; he stood there in the sun,
Reading of Mary's wedding till he knew
What he had cast away, what he had done.
He was rejected, Lion was the one.
Lion, the godly and the upright, he.
The black lines in the paper showed how it could be.

He pocketed the love gift and took horse,
And rode out to the pay-shed for his savings.
Then turned, and rode a lonely water-course,
Alone with bitter thoughts and bitter cravings.
Sun-shadows on the reeds made twinkling wavings;
An orange-bellied turtle scooped the mud;
Mary had married Lion, and the news drew blood.

And with the bitterness, the outcast felt
A passion for those old kind Shropshire places,
The ruined chancel where the nuns had knelt;
High Ercall and the Chase End and the Chases,
The glimmering mere, the burr, the well-known faces,
By Wrekin and by Zine and country town.
The orange-bellied turtle burrowed further down.

He could remember Mary now; her crying
Night after night alone through weary years,
Had touched him now and set the cords replying;
He knew her misery now, her ache, her tears,
The lonely nights, the ceaseless hope, the fears,
The arm stretched out for one not there, the slow
Loss of the lover's faith, the letting comfort go.

"Now I will ride," he said. Beyond the ford
He caught a fresh horse and rode on. The night
Found him a guest at Pepe Blanco's board,
Moody and drinking rum and ripe for fight;
Drawing his gun, he shot away the light,
And parried Pepe's knife and caught his horse,
And all night long he rode bedevilled by remorse.

At dawn he caught an eastward-going ferry,
And all day long he steamed between great banks
Which smelt of yellow thorn and loganberry.
Then wharves appeared, and chimneys rose in ranks,
Mast upon mast arose; the river's flanks
Were filled with English ships, and one he found
Needing another stoker, being homeward bound.

And all the time the trouble in his head
Ran like a whirlwind moving him; he knew
Since she was lost that he was better dead.
He had no project outlined, what to do,
Beyond go home; he joined the steamer's crew.
She sailed that night: he dulled his maddened soul,
Plying the iron coal-slice on the bunker coal.

Work did not clear the turmoil in his mind;
Passion takes colour from the nature's core;
His misery was as his nature, blind.
Life was still turmoil when he went ashore.
To see his old love married lay before;
To see another have her, drink the gall,
Kicked like a dog without, while he within had all.

* * * * *

Soon he was at the Foxholes, at the place
Whither, from over sea, his heart had turned
Often at evening-ends in times of grace.
But little outward change his eye discerned;
A red rose at her bedroom window burned,
Just as before. Even as of old the wasps
Poised at the yellow plums: the gate creaked on its hasps.

And the white fantails sidled on the roof
Just as before; their pink feet, even as of old,
Printed the frosty morning's rime with proof.
Still the zew-tallat's thatch was green with mould;
The apples on the withered boughs were gold.
Men and the times were changed: "And I," said he,
"Will go and not return, since she is not for me.

"I'll go, for it would be a scurvy thing
To spoil her marriage, and besides, she cares
For that half-priest she married with the ring.
Small joy for me in seeing how she wears,
Or seeing what he takes and what she shares.
That beauty and those ways: she had such ways,
There in the daffodils in those old April days."

So with an impulse of good will he turned,
Leaving that place of daffodils; the road
Was paven sharp with memories which burned;
He trod them strongly under as he strode.
At the Green Turning's forge the furnace glowed;
Red dithying sparks flew from the crumpled soft
Fold from the fire's heart; down clanged the hammers oft.

That was a bitter place to pass, for there
Mary and he had often, often stayed
To watch the horseshoe growing in the glare.
It was a tryst in childhood when they strayed.
There was a stile beside the forge; he laid
His elbows on it, leaning, looking down
The river-valley stretched with great trees turning brown.

Infinite, too, because it reached the sky,
And distant spires arose and distant smoke;
The whiteness on the blue went stilly by;
Only the clinking forge the stillness broke.
Ryemeadows brook was there; The Roughs, the oak
Where the White Woman walked; the black firs showed
Around the Occleve homestead Mary's new abode.

A long, long time he gazed at that fair place,
So well remembered from of old; he sighed.
"I will go down and look upon her face,
See her again, whatever may betide.
Hell is my future; I shall soon have died,
But I will take to hell one memory more;
She shall not see nor know; I shall be gone before;

"Before they turn the dogs upon me, even.
I do not mean to speak; but only see.
Even the devil gets a peep at heaven;
One peep at her shall come to hell with me;
One peep at her, no matter what may be."
He crossed the stile and hurried down the slope.
Remembered trees and hedges gave a zest to hope.

* * * * *

A low brick wall with privet shrubs beyond
Ringed in The Roughs upon the side he neared.
Eastward some bramble bushes cloaked the pond;
Westward was barley-stubble not yet cleared.
He thrust aside the privet boughs and peered.
The drooping fir trees let their darkness trail
Black like a pirate's masts bound under easy sail.

The garden with its autumn flowers was there;
Few that his wayward memory linked with her.
Summer had burnt the summer flowers bare,
But honey-hunting bees still made a stir.
Sprigs were still bluish on the lavender,
And bluish daisies budded, bright flies poised;
The wren upon the tree-stump carolled cheery-voiced.

He could not see her there. Windows were wide,
Late wasps were cruising, and the curtains shook.
Smoke, like the house's breathing, floated, sighed;
Among the trembling firs strange ways it took.
But still no Mary's presence blessed his look;
The house was still as if deserted, hushed.
Faint fragrance hung about it as if herbs were crushed.

Fragrance that gave his memory's guard a hint
Of times long past, of reapers in the corn,
Bruising with heavy boots the stalks of mint,
When first the berry reddens on the thorn.
Memories of her that fragrance brought. Forlorn
That vigil of the watching outcast grew;
He crept towards the kitchen, sheltered by a yew.

The windows of the kitchen opened wide.
Again the fragrance came; a woman spoke;
Old Mrs. Occleve talked to one inside.
A smell of cooking filled a gust of smoke.
Then fragrance once again, for herbs were broke;
Pourri was being made; the listener heard
Things lifted and laid down, bruised into sweetness, stirred.

While an old woman made remarks to one
Who was not the beloved: Michael learned
That Roger's wife at Upton had a son,
And that the red geraniums should be turned;
A hen was missing, and a rick was burned;
Our Lord commanded patience; here it broke;
The window closed, it made the kitchen chimney smoke.

Steps clacked on flagstones to the outer door;
A dairymaid, whom he remembered well,
Lined, now, with age, and grayer than before,
Rang a cracked cow-bell for the dinner-bell.
He saw the dining-room; he could not tell
If Mary were within: inly he knew
That she was coming now, that she would be in blue,

Blue with a silver locket at the throat,
And that she would be there, within there, near,
With the little blushes that he knew by rote,
And the gray eyes so steadfast and so dear,
The voice, pure like the nature, true and clear,
Speaking to her belov'd within the room.
The gate clicked, Lion came: the outcast hugged the gloom,

Watching intently from below the boughs,
While Lion cleared his riding-boots of clay,
Eyed the high clouds and went within the house.
His eyes looked troubled, and his hair looked gray.
Dinner began within with much to say.
Old Occleve roared aloud at his own joke.
Mary, it seemed, was gone; the loved voice never spoke.

Nor could her lover see her from the yew;
She was not there at table; she was ill,
Ill, or away perhaps—he wished he knew.
Away, perhaps, for Occleve bellowed still.
"If sick," he thought. "the maid or Lion will
Take food to her." He watched; the dinner ended.
The staircase was not used; none climbed it, none descended.

"Not here," he thought; but wishing to be sure,
He waited till the Occleves went to field,
Then followed, round the house, another lure,
Using the well-known privet as his shield.
He meant to run a risk; his heart was steeled.
He knew of old which bedroom would be hers;
He crouched upon the north front in among the firs.

The house stared at him with its red-brick blank,
Its vacant window-eyes; its open door,
With old wrought bridle ring-hooks at each flank,
Swayed on a creaking hinge as the wind bore.
Nothing had changed; the house was as before,
The dull red brick, the windows sealed or wide:
"I will go in," he said. He rose and stepped inside.

None could have seen him coming; all was still;
He listened in the doorway for a sign.
Above, a rafter creaked, a stir, a thrill
Moved, till the frames clacked on the picture line.
"Old Mother Occleve sleeps, the servants dine,"
He muttered, listening. "Hush." A silence brooded.
Far off the kitchen dinner clattered; he intruded.

Still, to his right, the best room door was locked.
Another door was at his left; he stayed.
Within, a stately timepiece ticked and tocked,
To one who slumbered breathing deep; it made
An image of Time's going and man's trade.
He looked: Old Mother Occleve lay asleep,
Hands crossed upon her knitting, rosy, breathing deep.

He tiptoed up the stairs which creaked and cracked.
The landing creaked; the shut doors, painted gray,
Loomed, as if shutting in some dreadful act.
The nodding frames seemed ready to betray.
The east room had been closed in Michael's day,
Being the best; but now he guessed it hers;
The fields of daffodils lay next it, past the firs.

Just as he reached the landing, Lion cried,
Somewhere below, "I'll get it." Lion's feet
Struck on the flagstones with a hasty stride,
"He's coming up," thought Michael, "we shall meet."
He snatched the nearest door for his retreat,
Opened with thieves' swift silence, dared not close,
But stood within, behind it. Lion's footsteps rose,

Running two steps at once, while Michael stood,
Not breathing, only knowing that the room
Was someone's bedroom smelling of old wood,
Hung with engravings of the day of doom.
The footsteps stopped; and Lion called, to whom?
A gentle question, tapping at a door,
And Michael shifted feet, and creakings took the floor.

The footsteps recommenced, a door-catch clacked;
Within an eastern room the footsteps passed.
Drawers were pulled loudly open and ransacked,
Chattels were thrust aside and overcast.
What could the thing be that he sought? At last
His voice said, "Here it is." The worméd floor
Creaked with returning footsteps down the corridor.

The footsteps came as though the walker read,
Or added rows of figures by the way;
There was much hesitation in the tread;
Lion seemed pondering which, to go or stay;
Then, seeing the door, which covered Michael, sway,
He swiftly crossed and shut it. "Always one
For order," Michael muttered; "Now be swift, my son."

The action seemed to break the walker's mood;
The footsteps passed downstairs, along the hall,
Out at the door and off towards the wood.
"Gone," Michael muttered. "Now to hazard all."
Outside, the frames still nodded on the wall.
Michael stepped swiftly up the floor to try
The door where Lion tapped and waited for reply.

It was the eastmost of the rooms which look
Over the fields of daffodils; the bound
Scanned from its windows is Ryemeadows brook,
Banked by gnarled apple trees and rising ground.
Most gently Michael tapped; he heard no sound,
Only the blind-pull tapping with the wind;
The kitchen-door was opened; kitchen-clatter dinned.

A woman walked along the hall below,
Humming; a maid, he judged; the footsteps died,
Listening intently still, he heard them go,
Then swiftly turned the knob and went inside.
The blind-pull at the window volleyed wide;
The curtains streamed out like a waterfall;
The pictures of the foxhunt clacked along the wall.

No one was there; no one; the room was hers.
A book of praise lay open on the bed;
The clothes-press smelt of many lavenders,
Her spirit stamped the room; herself was fled.
Here she found peace of soul like daily bread,
Here, with her lover Lion; Michael gazed;
He would have been the sharer had he not been crazed.

He took the love-gift handkerchief again;
He laid it on her table, near the glass,
So opened that the broidered name was plain;
"Plain," he exclaimed, "she cannot let it pass.
It stands and speaks for me as bold as brass.
My answer, my heart's cry, to tell her this,
That she is still my darling: all she was she is.

"So she will know at least that she was wrong,
That underneath the blindness I was true.
Fate is the strongest thing, though men are strong;
Out from beyond life I was sealed to you.
But my blind ways destroyed the cords that drew;
And now, the evil done, I know my need;
Fate has his way with those who mar what is decreed.

"And now, goodbye." He closed the door behind him,
Then stept, with firm swift footstep down the stair,
Meaning to go where she would never find him;
He would go down through darkness to despair.
Out at the door he stept; the autumn air
Came fresh upon his face; none saw him go.
"Goodbye, my love," he muttered; "it is better so."

Soon he was on the high road, out of sight
Of valley and farm; soon he could see no more
The oast-house pointing finger take the light
As tumbling pigeons glittered over; nor
Could he behold the wind-vane gilded o'er,
Swinging above the church; the road swung round.
"Now, the last look," he cried: he saw that holy ground.

"Goodbye," he cried; he could behold it all,
Spread out as in a picture; but so clear
That the gold apple stood out from the wall;
Like a red jewel stood the grazing steer.
Precise, intensely coloured, all brought near,
As in a vision, lay that holy ground.
"Mary is there," he moaned, "and I am outward bound.

"I never saw this place so beautiful,
Never like this. I never saw it glow.
Spirit is on this place; it fills it full.
So let the die be cast; I will not go.
But I will see her face to face and know
From her own lips what thoughts she has of me;
And if disaster come: right; let disaster be."

Back, by another way, he turned. The sun
Fired the yew-tops in the Roman woods.
Lights in the valley twinkled one by one,
The starlings whirled in dropping multitudes.
Dusk fingered into one earth's many moods,
Back to The Roughs he walked; he neared the brook;
A lamp burned in the farm; he saw; his fingers shook.

He had to cross the brook, to cross a field
Where daffodils were thick when years were young.
Then, were she there, his fortunes should be sealed.
Down the mud trackway to the brook he swung;
Then while the passion trembled on his tongue,
Dim, by the dim bridge-stile, he seemed to see
A figure standing mute; a woman—it was she.

She stood quite stilly, waiting for him there.
She did not seem surprised; the meeting seemed
Planned from all time by powers in the air
To change their human fates; he even deemed
That in another life this thing had gleamed,
This meeting by the bridge. He said, "It's you."
"Yes, I," she said, "who else? You must have known; you knew

"That I should come here to the brook to see,
After your message." "You were out," he said.
"Gone, and I did not know where you could be.
Where were you, Mary, when the thing was laid?"
"Old Mrs. Cale is dying, and I stayed
Longer than usual, while I read the Word.
You could have hardly gone." She paused, her bosom stirred.

"Mary, I sinned," he said. "Not that, dear, no,"
She said; "but, oh, you were unkind, unkind,
Never to write a word and leave me so,
But out of sight with you is out of mind."
"Mary, I sinned," he said, "and I was blind.
Oh, my beloved, are you Lion's wife?"
"Belov'd sounds strange," she answered, "in my present life.

"But it is sweet to hear it, all the same.
It is a language little heard by me
Alone, in that man's keeping, with my shame.
I never thought such miseries could be.
I was so happy in you, Michael. He
Came when I felt you changed from what I thought you.
Even now it is not love, but jealousy that brought you."

"That is untrue," he said. "I am in hell.
You are my heart's beloved, Mary, you.
By God, I know your beauty now too well.
We are each other's, flesh and soul, we two."
"That was sweet knowledge once," she said; "we knew
That truth of old. Now, in a strange man's bed,
I read it in my soul, and find it written red."

"Is he a brute?" he asked. "No," she replied.
"I did not understand what it would mean.
And now that you are back, would I had died;
Died, and the misery of it not have been.
Lion would not be wrecked, nor I unclean.
I was a proud one once, and now I'm tame;
Oh, Michael, say some word to take away my shame."

She sobbed; his arms went round her; the night heard
Intense fierce whispering passing, soul to soul,
Love running hot on many a murmured word,
Love's passionate giving into new control.
Their present misery did but blow the coal,
Did but entangle deeper their two wills,
While the brown brook ran on by buried daffodils.

VII.

Upon a light gust came a waft of bells,
Ringing the chimes for nine; a broken sweet,
Like waters bubbling out of hidden wells,
Dully upon those lovers' ears it beat.
Their time was at an end. Her tottering feet
Trod the dim field for home; he sought an inn.
"Oh, I have sinned," she cried, "but not a secret sin."

Inside The Roughs they waited for her coming;
Eyeing the ticking clock the household sat.
"Nine," the clock struck; the clock-weights ran down drumming;
Old Mother Occleve stretched her sewing flat.
"It's nine," she said. Old Occleve stroked the cat.
"Ah, cat," he said, "hast had good go at mouse?"
Lion sat listening tense to all within the house.

"Mary is late to-night," the gammer said.
"The times have changed," her merry husband roared.
"Young married couples now like lonely trade,
Don't think of bed at all, they think of board.
No multiplying left in people. Lord!
When I was Lion's age I'd had my five.
There was some go in folk when us two took to wive."

Lion arose and stalked and bit his lip.
"Or was it six?" the old man muttered, "six.
Us had so many I've alost the tip.
Us were two right good souls at getting chicks.
Two births of twins, then Johnny's birth, then Dick's" . . .
"Now give a young man time," the mother cried.
Mary came swiftly in and flung the room door wide.

Lion was by the window when she came,
Old Occleve and his wife were by the fire;
Big shadows leapt the ceiling from the flame.
She fronted the three figures and came nigher.
"Lion," she whispered, "I return my hire."
She dropped her marriage-ring upon the table.
Then, in a louder voice, "I bore what I was able,

"And Time and marriage might have worn me down,
Perhaps, to be a good wife and a blest,
With little children clinging to my gown,
And little blind mouths fumbling for my breast,
And this place would have been a place of rest
For you and me; we could have come to know
The depth; but that is over; I have got to go.

"He has come back, and I have got to go.
Our marriage ends." She stood there white and breathed.
Old Occleve got upon his feet with "So."
Blazing with wrath upon the hearth he seethed.
A log fell from the bars; blue spirals wreathed
Across the still old woman's startled face;
The cat arose and yawned. Lion was still a space.

Old Occleve turned to Lion. Lion moved
Nearer to Mary, picking up the ring.
His was grim physic from the soul beloved;
His face was white and twitching with the sting.
"You are my wife, you cannot do this thing,"
He said at last. "I can respect your pride.
This thing affects your soul; my judgment must decide.

"You are unsettled, shaken from the shock."
"Not so," she said. She stretched a hand to him,
White, large and noble, steady as a rock,
Cunning with many powers, curving, slim.
The smoke, drawn by the door-draught, made it dim.
"Right," Lion answered. "You are steady. Then
There is but one world, Mary; this, the world of men.

"And there's another world, without its bounds,
Peopled by streaked and spotted souls who prize
The flashiness that comes from marshy grounds
Above plain daylight. In their blinkered eyes
Nothing is bright but sentimental lies,
Such as are offered you, dear, here and now;
Lies which betray the strongest, God alone knows how.

"You, in your beauty and your whiteness, turn
Your strong, white mind, your faith, your fearless truth,
All for these rotten fires that so burn.
A sentimental clutch at perished youth.
I am too sick for wisdom, sick with ruth,
And this comes suddenly; the unripe man
Misses the hour, oh God. But you, what is your plan?

"What do you mean to do, how act, how live?
What warrant have you for your life? What trust?
You are for going sailing in a sieve.
This brightness is too mortal not to rust.
So our beginning marriage ends in dust.
I have not failed you, Mary. Let me know
What you intend to do, and whither you will go."

"Go from this place; it chokes me," she replied.
"This place has branded me; I must regain
My truth that I have soiled, my faith, my pride,
It is all poison and it leaves a stain.
I cannot stay nor be your wife again.
Never. You did your best, though; you were kind.
I have grown old to-night and left all that behind.

"Goodbye." She turned. Old Occleve faced his son.
Wrath at the woman's impudence was blent,
Upon his face, with wrath that such an one
Should stand unthrashed until her words were spent.
He stayed for Lion's wrath; but Mary went
Unchecked; he did not stir. Her footsteps ground
The gravel to the gate; the gate-hinge made a sound

Like to a cry of pain after a shot.
Swinging, it clicked, it clicked again, it swung
Until the iron latch bar hit the slot.
Mary had gone, and Lion held his tongue.
Old Mother Occleve sobbed; her white head hung
Over her sewing while the tears ran down
Her worn, blood-threaded cheeks and splashed upon her gown.

"Yes, it is true," said Lion, "she must go.
Michael is back. Michael was always first,
I did but take his place. You did not know.
Now it has happened, and you know the worst.
So passion makes the passionate soul accurst
And crucifies his darling. Michael comes
And the savage truth appears and rips my life to thrums."

Upon Old Occleve's face the fury changed
First to contempt, and then to terror lest
Lion, beneath the shock, should be deranged.
But Lion's eyes were steady, though distressed.
"Father, good-night," he said, "I'm going to rest.
Good-night, I cannot talk. Mother, good-night."
He kissed her brow and went; they heard him strike a light,

And go with slow depressed step up the stairs,
Up to the door of her deserted bower;
They heard him up above them, moving chairs;
The memory of his paleness made them cower.
They did not know their son; they had no power
To help, they only saw the new-won bride
Defy their child, and faith and custom put aside.

* * * * *

After a time men learned where Mary was:
Over the hills, not many miles away,
Renting a cottage and a patch of grass
Where Michael came to see her. Every day
Taught her what fevers can inhabit clay,
Shaking this body that so soon must die.
The time made Lion old: the winter dwindled by.

Till the long misery had to end or kill:
And "I must go to see her," Lion cried;
"I am her standby, and she needs me still;
If not to love she needs me to decide.
Dear, I will set you free. Oh, my bright bride,
Lost in such piteous ways, come back." He rode
Over the wintry hills to Mary's new abode.

And as he topped the pass between the hills,
Towards him, up the swerving road, there came
Michael, the happy cause of all his ills;
Walking as though repentance were the shame,
Sucking a grass, unbuttoned, still the same,
Humming a tune; his careless beauty wild
Drawing the women's eyes; he wandered with a child,

Who heard, wide-eyed, the scraps of tales which fell
Between the fragments of the tune; they seemed
A cherub bringing up a soul from hell.
Meeting unlike the meeting long since dreamed.
Lion dismounted; the great valley gleamed
With waters far below; his teeth were set
His heart thumped at his throat; he stopped; the two men met.

The child well knew that fatal issues joined;
He stood round-eyed to watch them, even as Fate
Stood with his pennypiece of causes coined
Ready to throw for issue; the bright hate
Throbbed, that the heavy reckoning need not wait.
Lion stepped forward, watching Michael's eyes.
"We are old friends," he said. "Now, Michael, you be wise,

"And let the harm already done suffice;
Go, before Mary's name is wholly gone.
Spare her the misery of desertion twice,
There's only ruin in the road you're on—
Ruin for both, whatever promise shone
In sentimental shrinkings from the fact.
So, Michael, play the man, and do the generous act.

"And go; if not for my sake, go for hers.
You only want her with your sentiment.
You are water roughed by every wind that stirs,
One little gust will alter your intent
All ways, to every wind, and nothing meant,
Is your life's habit. Man, one takes a wife,
Not for a three months' fancy, but the whole of life.

"We have been friends, and so I speak you fair.
How will you bear her ill, or cross, or tired?
Sentiment sighing will not help you there.
You call a half life's volume not desired.
I know your love for her. I saw it mired,
Mired, past going, by your first sharp taste
Of life and work; it stopped; you let her whole life waste,

"Rather than have the trouble of such love,
You will again; but if you do it now,
It will mean death, not sorrow. But enough.
You know too well you cannot keep a vow.
There are gray hairs already on her brow.
You brought them there. Death is the next step. Go,
Before you take the step." "No," Michael answered, "No.

"As for my past, I was a dog, a cur,
And I have paid blood-money, and still pay.
But all my being is ablaze with her;
There is no talk of giving up to-day.
I will not give her up. You used to say
Bodies are earth. I heard you say it. Liar!
You never loved her, you. She turns the earth to fire."

"Michael," said Lion, "you have said such things
Of other women; less than six miles hence
You and another woman felt love's wings
Rosy and fair, and so took leave of sense.
She's dead, that other woman, dead, with pence
Pressed on her big brown eyes, under the ground;
She that was merry once, feeling the world go round.

"Her child (and yours) is with her sister now,
Out there, behind us, living as they can;
Pinched by the poverty that you allow.
All a long autumn many rumours ran
About Sue Jones that was: you were the man.
The lad is like you. Think about his mother,
Before you turn the earth to fire with another."

"That is enough," said Michael, "you shall know
Soon, to your marrow, what my answer is;
Know to your lying heart; now kindly go.
The neighbours smell that something is amiss.
We two will keep a dignity in this,
Such as we can. No quarrelling with me here.
Mary might see; now go; but recollect, my dear,

"That if you twit me with your wife, you lie;
And that your further insult waits a day
When God permits that Mary is not by;
I keep the record of it, and shall pay.
And as for Mary; listen: we betray
No one. We keep our troth-plight as we meant.
Now go, the neighbours gather." Lion bowed and went.

Home to his memories for a month of pain,
Each moment like a devil with a tongue,
Urging him, "Set her free," or "Try again,"
Or "Kill that man and stamp him into dung."
"See her," he cried. He took his horse and swung
Out on the road to her; the rain was falling;
Her dropping house-eaves splashed him when he knocked
there, calling.

Drowned yellow jasmine dripped; his horse's flanks
Steamed, and dark runnels on his yellow hair
Streaked the groomed surface into blotchy ranks.
The noise of water dropping filled the air.
He knocked again; but there was no one there;
No one within, the door was locked, no smoke
Came from the chimney stacks, no clock ticked, no one spoke.

Only the water dripped and dribble-dripped,
And gurgled through the rain-pipe to the butt;
Drops, trickling down the windows paused or slipped;
A wet twig scraked as though the glass were cut.
The blinds were all drawn down, the windows shut.
No one was there. Across the road a shawl
Showed at a door a space; a woman gave a call.

"They're gone away," she cried. "They're gone away.
Been gone a matter of a week." Where to?
The woman thought to Wales, but could not say,
Nor if she planned returning; no one knew.
She looked at Lion sharply; then she drew
The half-door to its place and passed within,
Saying she hoped the rain would stop and spring begin.

Lion rode home. A month went by; and now
Winter was gone; the myriad shoots of green
Bent to the wind, like hair, upon the plough,
And up from withered leaves came celandine.
And sunlight came, though still the air was keen,
So that the first March market was most fair,
And Lion rode to market, having business there.

And in the afternoon, when all was done,
While Lion waited idly near the inn,
Watching the pigeons sidling in the sun,
As Jim the ostler put his gelding in,
He heard a noise of rioting begin
Outside the yard, with catcalls; there were shouts
Of "Occleve. Lion Occleve," from a pack of louts,

Who hung about the courtyard-arch, and cried,
"Yah, Occleve, of The Roughs, the married man,
Occleve, who had the bed and not the bride."
At first without the arch; but some began
To sidle in, still calling; children ran
To watch the baiting; they were farmer's leavings
Who shouted thus, men cast for drunkenness and thievings.

Lion knew most of them of old; he paid
No heed to them, but turned his back and talked
To Jim, of through-pin in his master's jade,
And how no horse-wounds should be stuped or caulked.
The rabble in the archway, not yet baulked,
Came crowding nearer, and the boys began,
"Who was it took your mistress, master married man?"

"Who was it, master, took your wife away?"
"I wouldn't let another man take mine."
"She had two husbands on her wedding day."
"See at a blush: he blushed as red as wine."
"She'd ought a had a cart-whip laid on fine."
The farmers in the courtyard watched the baiting,
Grinning, the barmaids grinned above the window grating.

Then through the mob of brawlers Michael stepped
Straight to where Lion stood. "I come," he said,
"To give you back some words which I have kept
Safe in my heart till I could see them paid.
You lied about Sue Jones; she died a maid
As far as I'm concerned, and there's your lie,
Full in your throat, and there, and there, and in your eye.

"And there's for stealing Mary" . . . as he struck,
Lion, side-stepping, countered: Michael dropped
Souse in a puddle of the courtyard muck;
Loud laughter followed when he rose up sopped.
Friends rushed to intervene, the fight was stopped.
The two were hurried out by different ways.
Men said, "'Tis stopped for now, but not for many days."

* * * * *

April appeared, the green earth's impulse came,
Pushing the singing sap until each bud
Trembled with delicate life as soft as flame,
Filled by the mighty heart-beat as with blood;
Death was at ebb, and Life in brimming flood.
But little joy in life could Lion see,
Striving to gird his will to set his loved one free,

While in his heart a hope still struggled dim
That the mad hour would pass, the darkness break,
The fever die, and she return to him,
The routed nightmare let the sleeper wake.
"Then we could go abroad," he cried, "and make
A new life, soul to soul; oh, love! return."
"Too late," his heart replied. At last he rode to learn.

Bowed, but alive with hope, he topped the pass,
And saw, below, her cottage by the way,
White, in a garden green with springing grass,
And smoke against the blue sky going gray.
"God make us all the happier for to-day,"
He muttered humbly; then, below, he spied,
Mary and Michael entering, walking side by side.

Arm within arm, like lovers, like dear lovers
Matched by the happy stars and newly wed,
Over whose lives a rosy presence hovers.
Lion dismounted, seeing hope was dead.
A child was by the road, he stroked his head,
And "Little one," he said, "who lives below
There, in the cottage there, where those two people go?"

"They do," the child said, pointing: "Mrs. Gray
Lives in the cottage there, and he does, too.
They've been back near a week since being away."
It was but seal to what he inly knew.
He thanked the child and rode. The Spring was blue,
Bluer than ever, and the birds were glad;
Such rapture in the hedges all the blackbirds had.

He was not dancing to that pipe of the Spring.
He reached The Roughs, and there, within her room,
Bowed for a time above her wedding ring,
Which had so chained him to unhappy doom;
All his dead marriage haunted in the gloom
Of that deserted chamber; all her things
Lay still as she had left them when her love took wings.

He kept a bitter vigil through the night,
Knowing his loss, his ten years' passion wasted,
His life all blasted, even at its height,
His cup of life's fulfilment hardly tasted.
Gray on the budding woods the morning hasted,
And looking out he saw the dawn come chill
Over the shaking acre pale with daffodil.

Birds were beginning in the meadows; soon
The blackbirds and the thrushes with their singing
Piped down the withered husk that was the moon,
And up the sky the ruddy sun came winging.
Cows plodded past, yokes clanked, the men were bringing
Milk from the barton. Someone shouted "Hup,
Dog, drive them dangy red ones down away on up."

Some heavy hours went by before he rose.
He went out of the house into the grass,
Down which the wind flowed much as water flows;
The daffodils bowed down to let it pass.
At the brook's edge a boggy bit there was,
Right at the field's north corner, near the bridge,
Fenced by a ridge of earth; he sat upon the ridge,

Watching the water running to the sea,
Watching the bridge, the stile, the path beyond,
Where the white violet's sweetness brought the bee.
He paid the price of being overfond.
The water babbled always from the pond
Over the pretty shallows, chattering, tinkling,
With trembles from the sunlight in its clearness wrinkling.

So gazing, like one stunned, it reached his mind,
That the hedge-brambles overhung the brook
More than was right, making the selvage blind;
The dragging brambles too much flotsam took.
Dully he thought to mend. He fetched a hook,
And standing in the shallow stream he slashed,
For hours, it seemed; the thorns, the twigs, the dead leaves
splashed,

Splashed and were bobbed away across the shallows;
Pale grasses with the sap gone from them fell,
Sank, or were carried down beyond the sallows.
The bruised ground-ivy gave out earthy smell.
"I must be dead," he thought, "and this is hell."
Fiercely he slashed, till, glancing at the stile,
He saw that Michael stood there, watching, with a smile,

His old contemptuous smile of careless ease,
As though the world with all its myriad pain
Sufficed, but only just sufficed, to please.
Michael was there, the robber come again.
A tumult ran like flame in Lion's brain;
Then, looking down, he saw the flowers shake:
Gold, trembling daffodils; he turned, he plucked a stake

Out of the hedge that he had come to mend,
And flung his hook to Michael, crying, "Take;
We two will settle our accounts, my friend,
Once and for ever. May the Lord God make
You see your sins in time." He whirled his stake
And struck at Michael's head; again he struck;
While Michael dodged and laughed, "Why, man, I bring
you luck.

"Don't kill a bringer of good news. You fool,
Stop it and listen. I have come to say:
Lion, for God's sake, listen and be cool.
You silly hothead, put that stake away.
Listen, I tell you." But he could not stay
The anger flaming in that passionate soul.
Blows rained upon him thick; they stung; he lost control.

Till, "If you want to fight," he cried, "Let be.
Let me get off the bridge and we will fight.
That firm bit by the quag will do for me.
So. Be on guard, and God defend the right.
You foaming madman, with your hell's delight,
Smashing a man with stakes before he speaks:
On guard. I'll make you humbler for the next few weeks."

The ground was level there; the daffodils
Glimmered and danced beneath their cautious feet,
Quartering for openings for the blow that kills.
Beyond the bubbling brook a thrush was sweet.
Quickly the footsteps slid; with feint and cheat,
The weapons poised and darted and withdrew.
"Now stop it," Michael said, "I want to talk to you."

"We do not stop till one of us is dead,"
Said Lion, rushing in. A short blow fell
Dizzily, through all guard, on Michael's head.
His hedging-hook slashed blindly but too well:
It struck in Lion's side. Then, for a spell,
Both, sorely stricken, staggered, while their eyes
Dimmed under mists of blood; they fell, they tried to rise,—

Tried hard to rise, but could not, so they lay,
Watching the clouds go sailing on the sky,
Touched with a redness from the end of day.
There was all April in the blackbird's cry.
And lying there they felt they had to die,
Die and go under mould and feel no more
April's green fire of life go running in earth's core.

"There was no need to hit me," Michael said;
"You quiet thinking fellows lose control.
This fighting business is a foolish trade.
And now we join the grave-worm and the mole.
I tried to stop you. You're a crazy soul;
You always were hot-headed. Well, let be:
You deep and passionate souls have always puzzled me.

"I'm sorry that I struck you. I was hit,
And lashed out blindly at you; you were mad.
It would be different if you'd stopped a bit.
You are too blind when you are angry, lad.
Oh, I am giddy, Lion; dying, bad,
Dying." He raised himself, he sat, his look
Grew greedy for the water bubbling in the brook.

And as he watched it, Lion raised his head
Out of a bloodied clump of daffodil.
"Michael," he moaned, "I, too, am dying: dead.
You're nearer to the water. Could you fill
Your hat and give me drink? Or would it spill?
Spill, I expect." "I'll try," said Michael, "Try—
I may as well die trying, since I have to die."

Slowly he forced his body's failing life
Down to the water; there he stooped and filled;
And as his back turned Lion drew his knife,
And hid it close, while all his being thrilled
To see, as Michael came, the water spilled,
Nearer and ever nearer, bright, so bright.
"Drink," muttered Michael, "drink. We two shall sleep
to-night."

He tilted up the hat, and Lion drank.
Lion lay still a moment, gathering power.
Then rose, as Michael gave him more, and sank.
Then, like a dying bird whom death makes tower,
He raised himself above the bloodied flower
And struck with all his force in Michael's side.
"You should not have done that," his stricken comrade cried.

"No; for I meant to tell you, Lion; meant
To tell you; but I cannot now; I die.
That hit me to the heart and I am spent.
Mary and I have parted; she and I
Agreed she must return, lad. That is why
I came to see you. She is coming here,
Back to your home to-night. Oh, my beloved dear,

"You come to tread a bloody path of flowers.
All the gold flowers are covered up with blood,
And the bright bugles blow along the towers;
The bugles triumph like the Plate in flood."
His spilled life trickled down upon the mud
Between weak, clutching fingers. "Oh," he cried,
"This isn't what we planned here years ago." He died.

Lion lay still while the cold tides of death
Came brimming up his channels. With one hand
He groped to know if Michael still drew breath.
His little hour was running out its sand.
Then, in a mist, he saw his Mary stand
Above. He cried aloud, "He was my brother.
I was his comrade sworn, and we have killed each other.

"Oh desolate grief, beloved, and through me.
We wise who try to change. Oh, you wild birds,
Help my unhappy spirit to the sea.
The golden bowl is scattered into sherds."
And Mary knelt and murmured passionate words
To that poor body on the dabbled flowers:
"Oh, beauty, oh, sweet soul, oh, little love of ours—

"Michael, my own heart's darling speak; it's me,
Mary. You know my voice. I'm here, dear, here.
Oh, little golden-haired one, listen. See,
It's Mary, Michael. Speak to Mary, dear.
Oh, Michael, little love, he cannot hear;
And you have killed him, Lion; he is dead.
My little friend, my love, my Michael, golden head.

"We had such fun together, such sweet fun,
My love and I, my merry love and I.
Oh, love, you shone upon me like the sun.
Oh, Michael, say some little last good-bye."
Then in a great voice Lion called, "I die.
Go home and tell my people. Mary. Hear.
Though I have wrought this ruin, I have loved you, dear.

"Better than he; not better, dear, as well.
If you could kiss me, dearest, at this last.
We have made bloody doorways from our hell,
Cutting our tangle. Now, the murder past,
We are but pitiful poor souls; and fast
The darkness and the cold come. Kiss me, sweet;
I loved you all my life; but some lives never meet

"Though they go wandering side by side through Time.
Kiss me," he cried. She bent, she kissed his brow:
"Oh, friend," she said, "you're lying in the slime."
"Three blind ones, dear," he murmured, "in the slough,
Caught fast for death; but never mind that now;
Go home and tell my people. I am dying,
Dying, dear, dying now." He died; she left him lying,

And kissed her dead one's head and crossed the field.
"They have been killed," she called, in a great crying.
"Killed, and our spirits' eyes are all unsealed.
The blood is scattered on the flowers drying."
It was the hush of dusk, and owls were flying;
They hooted as the Occleves ran to bring
That sorry harvest home from Death's red harvesting.

They laid the bodies on the bed together.
And "You were beautiful," she said, "and you
Were my own darling in the April weather.
You knew my very soul, you knew, you knew.
Oh, my sweet, piteous love, I was not true.
Fetch me fair water and the flowers of spring;
My love is dead, and I must deck his burying."

They left her with her dead; they could not choose
But grant the spirit burning in her face
Rights that their pity urged them to refuse.
They did her sorrow and the dead a grace.
All night they heard her passing footsteps trace
Down to the garden from the room of death.
They heard her singing there, lowly, with gentle breath,

To the cool darkness full of sleeping flowers,
Then back, still singing soft, with quiet tread,
But at the dawn her singing gathered powers
Like to the dying swan who lifts his head
On Eastnor lifts it, singing, dabbled red,
Singing the glory in his tumbling mind,
Before the doors burst in, before death strikes him blind.

So triumphing her song of love began,
Ringing across the meadows like old woe
Sweetened by poets to the help of man
Unconquered in eternal overthrow;
Like a great trumpet from the long ago
Her singing towered; all the valley heard.
Men jingling down to meadow stopped their teams and stirred.

And they, the Occleves, hurried to the door,
And burst it, fearing; there the singer lay
Drooped at her lover's bedside on the floor,
Singing her passionate last of life away.
White flowers had fallen from a blackthorn spray
Over her loosened hair. Pale flowers of spring
Filled the white room of death; they covered everything.

Primroses, daffodils, and cuckoo-flowers.
She bowed her singing head on Michael's breast.
"Oh, it was sweet," she cried, "that love of ours.
You were the dearest, sweet; I loved you best.
Beloved, my beloved, let me rest
By you forever, little Michael mine.
Now the great hour is stricken, and the bread and wine

"Broken and spilt; and now the homing birds
Draw to a covert, Michael; I to you.
Bury us two together," came her words.
The dropping petals fell about the two.
Her heart had broken; she was dead. They drew
Her gentle head aside; they found it pressed
Against the broidered 'kerchief spread on Michael's breast,

The one that bore her name in Michael's hair,
Given so long before. They let her lie,
While the dim moon died out upon the air,
And happy sunlight coloured all the sky.
The last cock crowed for morning; carts went by;
Smoke rose from cottage chimneys; from the byre
The yokes went clanking by, to dairy, through the mire.

In the day's noise the water's noise was stilled,
But still it slipped along, the cold hill-spring,
Dropping from leafy hollows, which it filled,
On to the pebbly shelves which made it sing;
Glints glittered on it from the 'fisher's wing;
It saw the moorhen nesting; then it stayed
In a great space of reeds where merry otters played.

Slowly it loitered past the shivering reeds
Into a mightier water; thence its course
Becomes a pasture where the salmon feeds,
Wherein no bubble tells its humble source;
But the great waves go rolling, and the horse
Snorts at the bursting waves and will not drink,
And the great ships go outward, bubbling to the brink,

Outward, with men upon them, stretched in line,
Handling the halliards to the ocean's gates,
Where flicking windflaws fill the air with brine,
And all the ocean opens. Then the mates
Cry, and the sunburnt crew no longer waits,
But sing triumphant and the topsail fills
To this old tale of woe among the daffodils.

The Greek God

By Anthony Wharton

I

When I first saw him he was leaning against the railing at the head of the ferry-steps, staring across the river at the Dutch cruiser which was coaling at Sir John Rogerson's Quay. His face was grimy with coal-dust, but, seen in profile, his features were absurdly beautiful, and not even the shapeless old slops which he wore could conceal the lithe grace of his broad-shouldered, slim-flanked body. His eyes, when presently he turned them towards me, were magnificent; fearless, serene, virginal. A casual inquiry as to the big 100-ton crane at the end of the North Wall led easily into general conversation, in the course of which I discovered that the Greek God's name was O'Reilly; that he was by profession a coal-heaver; and that he was at that particular moment half-drunk. Also that he was very indignant with a certain O'Neill, a ganger, who had, adverbially, taken on an adjectival pal of his own in the God's just and proper room.

"Right enough, sir, I'm a bit boozed, I'm not denyin' o' that. But iv I was that boozed as cudn't open me mouth for fear o' lakin', I'm worth two o' the man that's in me place. Ai am I. An' well O'Nale knows it, too. But he's had his knife in me ever since New Year's night—jus' waitin' for a chanst for to cross me. The fat-bellied son-iv-a——"

I interrupted hastily. "What happened on New Year's night?" I asked.

"Oh, nuthin' much, sir. Ony—well, there was a bit iv a spree on up at a man called Joe Byrne's place . . . an' yeh see like, well, Joey's dawther was afther marryin' a nevyew iv O'Nale's, an' O'Nale was thryin' for to come over us all wid his kineness in allowin' his nevyew to marry

Joey Byrne's dawther. Do yeh undherstand? Well—I stud it as long as I cud, an' then I cudn't stand it anny longer, an' I tould O'Nale, quietly, to give over talkin' an' let's enjoy ourselves properly. Jus' like that. 'Yeh're talkin' too much, O'Nale,' sez I; 'give over an' give us a chanst to enjoy ourselves properly.' Quitely an' civil like that. Well, I putt it to yeh, wudn't anny ornery sensible man jus' a' hel' his whisht an' said nuthin' more about it? Now, wudn't he?"

"Of course," I agreed, servilely.

"Yes. Iv coorse he wud. But what does O'Nale do? Ups wid a tin box as Joey had for a spittoo an' shies it at me head. It didn't altogether hit me—jus' barely griz me ear—but that wasn't *his* fault—an' him an' me got into it as hard as we cud skelp. I hit him a good few belts an' he hit me a good few, too, an' then, be bad luck, didn't Joey's missus come up an' we had for to stop. She went away downstairs agen afther a while, but howsomever we cudn't begin agen. An' so there we wor, an' there we've been—jus' not hot enough, yeh know, but ready for it all the same. Do yeh undherstand?"

I expressed a hope that he would find some way to a reconciliation with the enemy.

"No," he said, blackly. "I'm goin' to have it out wid him over this job to-day. He gev me the sack jus' for pyure hellishness, an' begod he'll hear somethin' more about it before he finds his own door this night."

There was a long silence. Across the river, in incessant rhythm, came the clank of the cranes, the crashing roar of the falling coal. The London boat, coming upstream, blared indignantly at three lighters fussing importantly across her path, their decks awash in the choppy water. The God's blue eyes stared always at the gaunt hull of the Dutch cruiser. In anger they were still serene.

I offered my tobacco-pouch—humbly; for, in silence, he extorted from me that unreasoning, instinctive homage which physical beauty alone claims from the sons of men. He declined the pouch; his pipe, he said, was broken. I suggested that we should go in search of a new one, and, on his assenting sunnily to this, we walked along the quay a little way, turned into a side-street, and eventually discovered a small and odorous shop which contained not

merely pipes but also the most comprehensive assortment of merchandise that I have ever seen collected in any one place. After careful deliberation the God found a cutty to his taste, having previously tested half the contents of the box by the simple process of putting them into his mouth and sucking at them for some thoughtful moments. The mistress of the shop offered no objection; evidently it was the usual procedure.

He then discovered that he had no tobacco. I begged to be allowed to present him with two large, black, dangerous-looking lumps of plug, and he took me to his heart with a wonderful smile and a curiously feminine touch of his huge hand on my coat-sleeve.

"Begor, sor—well, well!" His pleasure became incoherent; he wagged his head, and beamed from me to the woman and from the woman back to me; and all the time it was plain that he knew that he was a God, and that from man, woman, and child unreasoning trust and welcome were his right, drunk or sober.

His good-humour went off at an abrupt tangent. "What's me name?" he asked, fixing a twinkling gaze upon the proprietress of the shop.

The woman, a decent, quiet-eyed matron of forty or thereabouts, with sallow, lined face out of which life had blotted all trace of comeliness or coquetry, apparently irrevocably, glanced at him coldly.

"Yer name?" she repeated stiffly. "How do I know what it is?"

"Don't yeh remember me?" persisted the God, unabashed.

"Remember yeh?" Her eyes ran over him; instinctively she retreated a step, her head on one side, one hand fidgeting at her breast.

"Ai. Remember me. Las' night. That was me."

The woman stared at him still, but with a new expression. After a moment the God's smile broke through her defences; her eyes brightened, her lips parted in a demure, half-timid, half-encouraging smile, a faint colour tinged her thin cheeks. She was suddenly, beneath his eyes, almost girlish, almost pretty.

"Go on wid yeh," she said, glancing at him sideways. "You an' yer las' night."

The God winked at me confidentially, and then turned and surveyed the little shop with a smile. As I have said, it was a great many kinds of shop; being at once a tobacconist's, a fishmonger's, a dairyman's, a gentleman's outfitter's, a milliner's, an Italian merchant's, a confectioner's, a toyshop, a stationer's, a bookseller's, a bootmaker's, and various other unexpected and unclassified things. That any human being should undertake to imagine any article that it did not contain appeared improbable; but Gods are, admittedly, improbable in their ways.

"Butther an' boots an' dickies," murmured this one, pleasantly musing. "An' coorsets."

"P'r'aps that's what *you* want," said the eternal feminine behind the counter, willing to sport a little on this classic thin ice. "Come here an' I'll measure yeh."

"I'll tell yeh no lie, me dear," said the God. "It's a strait-wescoat I'm lukkin' for."

"Ah, well, I've nare-a-one o' *them*. But there's one waitin' for yeh, warmin' at the fire up beyant in the Richmon'."

"Yeh've no cawfins, either," said the God, "have yeh?"

"No—not your size. But I'll ordher yeh one. They'll have to build it speshul for yeh, yeh know. Yeh're such a fine man." This with the mockery of a belle of twenty.

"An' another thing I don't see," said the God, looking about him pensively, "is duck's milk. No—nor paycox eggs. Nor," he paused, swaying on his long limbs a little, for his recent libations were beginning to tell on him now somewhat, "nor . . . nor wooden legs. Yeh have no wooden legs?"

"No," retorted Amaryllis defiantly.

"Yeh're shure?"

"Quite shure."

The wicked God leaned over the counter investigatingly. "Show me!" he said. Then he laughed with uproarious laughter, and, descending upon me, slapped me on the shoulder with the playfulness of a young steam-hammer; at the shock of that disconcerting caress my hat fell off; whereat I was annoyed, the floor of the shop being dirty and the hat a new hat. The God, to my surprise, made no motion to restore my headgear to its proper place.

He was staring with a curious little smile at the woman behind the counter.

I looked at her, too, and forgot my own injuries. She was blushing painfully, clumsily, sullenly; humiliation and, Heaven knows just why, shame, were expressed in every line of her body; we all knew that the God had laughed a little too joyously. He crossed to her and patted her arm fraternally.

"Shure, I was only jokin'," he said, gently.

She shook off his hand, not too petulantly, and glanced at him for a timid, searching moment.

"Yeh ought to be more careful wid yer jokin'," she said dully. He patted her arm again, and we left the shop. At the door he turned to smile back at her. She shook her head at him, but she, too, was smiling.

II

The God, with the aid of a formidable clasp-knife, filled his pipe, and lit it with audible luxuriousness, a reminiscent twinkle still gladdening his blue eyes. Before, however, the damp, heavy tobacco was burning quite satisfactorily, abruptly the twinkle extinguished itself; he removed the match from the pipe and the pipe from his mouth, and bent upon my face a gaze of anxious and unevadable scrutiny.

"Yeh're a generous man an' a gentleman," he said slowly and gravely, "an' yeh undherstand that I don't mean for to take anny liberty that mightn't be welcome—play-actin' an' humbuggin' wid women, an' me in yer company?"

"I enjoyed your play-acting as much as she did," I replied, probably truthfully.

He looked at me attentively, then made a gesture with his hand that recognised our relations as frankly and fraternally defined, without sacrifice of dignity on either side.

"Will yeh come down to me own place an' I'll play yeh a chune on the concertina, an' yeh can smoke yer pipe an' be quite this hot day? Or mebbe yeh'd like for to take

a sthroll down be the Basin, an' I'll show yeh the work I shud be doin' this moment, iv it wasn't for that dirty skunk, O'Nale. Ai. We'll go down there an' have a word wid him, mebbe."

He muttered something further which I did not catch in detail, but whose general outline caused me to perceive very plainly that an audience with the concertina would be a more prudent enterprise than a visit to the scene of Mr. O'Neill's activities.

"It's too hot to walk," I said, firmly, "and too hot to smoke out of doors. And, besides, I want to hear you play the concertina . . . If you play it well."

He smiled, a pleased and peaceful God again.

"I play it middlin'," he said judicially. "Annyway, I'll do me best. An' mebbe Eily will be at home—that's me little sisther. Mebbe we'd get her to do a step for us. A likely young slip, she is. An' a holy terror for the dancin' an' the boys. I do have to spake to her sometimes about the boys."

"And she?" I asked, smiling, "does she ever speak to you?"

"Ony when they're married," he said, quite seriously and unexpectedly. And, after a reflective pause, "Shure an' she's right, too. Fun's fun, an' the rest of it's not worth the money yeh dhrink thryin' to forget about it."

He became gloomy, and we walked for some way in silence. I found myself speculating as to the more intimate and serious history of the God. Who, I wondered idly, were the women who had found the sunshine of life in that smile of his, had watched the play of his blue eyes and clean-cut lips, had surrendered themselves to his magnificent virility? How had they come to him? How had they gone from him? What had they learned from him, and what had they taught him? I retreated shamefacedly to the more respectable aspects of my divinity's existence. I learned that he earned between thirty and forty shillings a week when he was "workin'," and that he invariably lost ten shillings a week backing horses.

"I'm lucky someways," he said, blithe once more, "but not wid horses. But, shure, what does it matther? If yeh're shure o' winnin', the game's not worth playin'. Here we are. They have the decorashuns up for us, too, begor."

III

We passed through the aperture formed by the walls of two small houses, and found ourselves in a little *cul-de-sac* enclosed on either side by a row of dingy, white-washed cottages and terminated at its further end by the grimy wall of an evil-smelling soap-manufactory. Under an avenue of clothes-lines slung across the enclosure and gay with a motley festoonery of amazing garments, we approached a doorway in which a bold-looking, golden-haired young woman stood engaged in obviously spirited badinage with a hulking youth in corduroys and shirt-sleeves. The latter, at sight of my companion, nodded to him uncertainly, grinned sheepishly at the girl, then, turning, lounged away slowly. The girl stood her ground with a defiant smile on her full lips, one hand resting on her hip, the other playing with a cheap, gaudy brooch, which she wore fastened in a vivid yellow tie.

"Hello!" she said pertly. "Aren't yeh workin' to-day?"

"No," replied the God, briefly but amiably.

"Why?" she demanded, her eyes taking minute stock of my clothes. "Better engaged, I suppose?"

"Ai," said the God. "Like yerself, me young lady. Where'd yeh get that brooch, I'd like for to know?"

"That?" answered the girl evasively. "Oh, I've had that this long time."

The God grunted, plainly incredulous. "This is me sisther, sor," he said with a smile that made her mine.

She threw me a nod and a little challenging smile that displayed her tiny white teeth deliberately; I saw, at close quarters, that her face was rouged and powdered, and that the goldenness of her elaborate chevelure was probably fictitious. Her clothes were cheaply smart, her short skirt displaying liberally stockings of a light slate colour which insisted themselves on the most casual observation. One foot rested on the instep of the other; an aperture in one of the grey stockings revealed portion of an unclean heel. She was quite a child, barely seventeen, I learned later from the God; but her eyes held the experienced assurance of a woman of forty.

"Is the missus inside?" asked her brother. She nodded

and stood aside to allow us to enter a microscopic hall which we completely filled.

"Are yeh there, Maggie?" the God asked in a low, and I thought rather apprehensive tone. He pushed open the door of a room on the left of the hall, and after an investigating glance, motioned to me to precede him. I noticed that he had taken off his hat; in my surprised reconsideration of the God as a married man I had forgotten to remove my own.

In a close, stuffy, ill-lighted room, nearly two-thirds of which was occupied by a bed with a patchwork quilt and three legs—the fourth being replaced by a packing-case—sat the God's wife, a plain, fattish, dejected-looking woman apparently between fifteen and twenty years the God's senior. She had been working at a sewing-machine, hemming a coarse apron, but rose hurriedly as we entered, her white, heavy face flushing dully as she caught sight of the stranger. She wore at her breast a little enamelled medallion of the Sacred Heart; her expression was one of pathetic goodness and sweetness.

"This is a gentleman I met on an inquiry about th' electhric crane down beyant," explained her husband.

She shook hands with me abruptly and nervously, then reseated herself at the sewing-machine.

"I fear we have disturbed you," I said, miserably; the droop at the corners of her mouth was so painfully significant.

"Oh!" she said, deprecatorily, flushing again. "Not at all."

"Not at all, not at all," said the God, who had already unearthed his concertina from beneath the bed, and now seated himself on the patchwork quilt with bohemian *abandon*. "Maggie's as pleased to see yeh here as I am meself. Ain't yeh, Maggie? Go an' tell Eily to come in an' give us a step, will yeh?"

His wife rose and left the room. Returning after a moment, she informed us that Eily was in her room, and could not come "presently."

"Titivatin' herself, I suppose," said the God, indulgently. "Ah, well, we mus' ony go on widout her. Light yer pipe, sor. Smoke away. The missus is used to it. Now, what'll I sing yeh? Eh?"

"Whatever you like," I replied, trustfully.

"Are yeh goin' to sing?" asked his wife with a nervous, dubious giggle. He looked at her with clouded eyes.

"Why? Don't yeh think I ought to?" His voice was childish in its appeal for support; indeed, his whole attitude towards her was precisely that of a wilful child towards its mother. "I'm not a good singer, right enough. I know that," he continued wistfully. "Still, as the gentleman's come so far. . . ."

"Tsch, tsch!" said his wife. "Well, go on then."

He sat for a moment or two thoughtful, his huge fingers spread over the keys of the instrument, his eyes fixed on the carpet. He was incredibly handsome; absolutely devoid, too, of self-consciousness, absorbed in the selection of a song worthy of his guest. The woman, on the other hand, in almost every other respect his superior, was nervously deprecatory and embarrassed. She kept repeating that he couldn't play, that he couldn't sing; that the gentleman didn't care for that sort of music, and so on; all the time flashing little side-glances at me which plainly confessed a glimmering hope of contradiction. Suddenly the God opened his mouth and sang. His voice, true enough, but piercing as a steam-whistle, was, in that confined space, absolutely ear-splitting. What the song was about, I do not even now know; but assuredly it was the most doleful ditty ever trolled by mortal man. The metre was Pindaric in its luxuriant variety; sometimes eight or nine syllables rushed together to one tumultuous foot; sometimes one vowel lingered over a whole line. From time to time he paused to take breath, and punctuated the pause by two staccato notes from the concertina in an entirely different time and key. I hardly dared to look at either of them, but I knew that the woman's eyes were fixed on my mutinous lips.

The song ended, unexpectedly, on the dominant. "Well? How's that?" the God asked, doubtfully.

"Splendid," I said, enthusiastically. "I don't know how you contrive to . . ."

"I'll play yeh a jig," he said, mercifully cutting short my travail.

The instrument was a wretched one, probably purchased for a couple of shillings. But the music which he now

made with it was magical. Heaven knows how old the air was; how many generations of his ancestors had danced to it, on lost cross-roads, in ruined barns and long-vanished cottages; danced to it on golden sunlit days; danced to it by orange harvest-moons; danced to it round the world from Dublin. It got into my dull, common-sense blood; it got into his own head and heels. He rose from the bed and, still playing, danced before us, as light on his feet as a happy child, exultant in his own nimbleness, forgetful of everything but the sheer joy of rhythm. I watched him in silence and thought of vine-leaves and dappled fawn-skins and all the madness of the young God Bacchus. His wife beat time on the table with the point of her scissors, softly.

He ended breathless, and this time my applause was sufficiently sincere to put us all at our ease. I assented without the show of protest to tea and griddle-bread made by Mrs. O'Reilly's own hands. The truant Eily reappeared with the teacups.

She had taken pains to effect a complete change of toilette, and she now proceeded to take equal pains in the production of the particular brand of small-talk to which, doubtless, she judged me accustomed. She spoke in a languid, subdued voice, contriving in some marvellous way to eliminate almost all trace of her natural accent and intonation. In the consumption of the tea and the griddle-bread—both of which were excellent—she displayed a mincing daintiness, making great play with an embroidered and heavily-perfumed handkerchief.

For example:—

"The city is quite deserted now, isn't it?"

"Quite," I agreed.

"Everyone is at the seaside, I suppose."

"I suppose so, too."

"Or travelling abroad."

"Or travelling abroad."

"It will be very quiet now until the Horse Show. I suppose you'll go?"

I supposed so, too.

"Horse Show week is very gay, isn't it? Dublin is quite another city."

"Quite."

"All the county people come up for it—and English people. A lot of English people come across for it, I believe."

I believed so, too.

And so on. The God and his wife listened admiringly to this edifying duologue. Plainly they were intensely proud of and pleased with Eily's social attainments. The God, for his better pleasure, electing to drink from his saucer rather than from his cup, his sister glanced, ostentatiously, first at the saucer and then at me, lifted her eyebrows and smiled disdainfully. Once her foot, quite by accident, I have no doubt, encountered mine beneath the table; she shot a discreet glance at me from beneath her long, dark eyelashes. When at length I rose to go, she bowed me an artistically indifferent farewell from her chair; my hostess, who had risen, manifestly with the intention of accompanying me to the door, resumed her seat hastily and bowed also, intimidated into correctness. The God looked on, serenely approving.

He insisted on escorting me as far as the quay, and as we went along he became confidential on the score of Eily; it was noticeable that he made no reference whatever to his wife.

"She's a winnin' way wid her, an' she can't help it, like meself," he wound up, after some academic doubts as to the wisdom of his sister's general conduct in regard to the other sex—so far as I could discover, the other sex was the only business Eily employed herself with. "All the same," he added, after a pause, "I do be worried about her often." And, after another longer pause, "Ai. Often."

At the corner where, regretfully, the God and I were to part, stood, by evil chance, a public-house. He halted at its door and looked at me.

"No," I said severely, "you've had enough to-day already."

"Jus' one?" he urged wistfully.

We went into the place, a squalid, reeking little pot-house, with half-an-inch of sawdust on its floor. Save for ourselves and the proprietor, it was empty. I ordered two whiskeys. The God gulped his down; I tasted mine and, dismayed, set it down with an irrepressible grimace.

"Yeh don't like that, don't yeh?" he asked in mild surprise.

"I am only a weak vessel," I replied apologetically.

"Iv yeh like," he grinned, "I'll finish it for yeh. That is, iv yeh're shure yeh can't manage it?"

He despatched it with the same marvellous expedition, and was just about to set the tumbler on the counter when three men entered the shop.

"Be the Lord!" said the God. "O'Nale!"

IV

The three men, who had entered the shop in boisterous cheerfulness, had by one impulse halted in dead silence just inside the door, and now stood looking expectantly at my companion. One of them, a burly fellow, well over six feet in height, with a heavy jowl and little, blood-shot, twinkling eyes, stood somewhat in advance of the other two. I saw him fasten the lowest button of his reefer-jacket, stealthily; then the button above it; and then the God moved down on him in battle array. They exchanged no word; like wild beasts they fell upon one another; and like wild beasts they fought: murderously, foully, unspeakably.

The ganger was the bigger and heavier man, but the God, despite those two hastily consumed whiskeys, was by far the quicker of hand and foot. They used both, miscellaneously. Neither of them possessed, apparently, the most rudimentary notion of the conventional rules of combat; their code was a mixture of wrestling, boxing, kicking, gouging, and butting. And, though neither of them succeeded, each of them made repeated and earnest attempts to back the other up against the swinging doors of the shop, clearly with the idea of knocking his opponent's head through the glass. But that was later, when the first wild fury of the fray had cooled to cunning.

At the first onset they closed, broke loose, then closed again, the ganger driving his bullet head like a battering-ram against the God's chin, and receiving with a grunt a smashing drive at the angle of the jaw. For a moment they clinched, their legs busy; as the proprietor of the shop moved

quietly towards the door, the ganger lifted the God from his feet, threw him with a crash against the woodwork of the counter, knelt on him, and proceeded, systematically, to strangle him. The God, without protest, inserted his thumb in one of the ganger's eyes, and having by the infliction of what must have been excruciating agony, produced a slight relaxation of the strangling operations, writhed free, and sprang to his feet. His enemy, slower, but wearing already the grim smile of assured victory, followed him, and after some treacherous interchanges, cut his cheek open with a savage swing, the thud of which made me sick and faint.

"Jee!" ejaculated the proprietor of the shop. He had satisfied himself, by a glance up and down the street, that no interference by the powers of the law was to be anticipated for the moment. Having said "Jee!" he held up to the light the tumbler which he was drying, administered to it a last artistic polish, put it down, soaked the duster under a tap, and laid it carelessly and silently upon the counter. His attitude throughout was absolutely neutral; the wet duster was there; if either of the combatants needed it he could use it. At intervals he returned to the door and surveyed the street calmly.

Meanwhile the battle raged dizzily. Up and down, backwards and forwards surged the gladiators, hugging, punching, tripping, panting, sweating, snarling, cursing, their clothes white with sawdust; their hands and faces bloody. Thus far the fight was the ganger's; the God had received heavy punishment, and had plainly injured his left leg in that first dire fall. He had fallen back upon defensive tactics now; it was the ganger who forced the fighting. The ganger's two friends glanced across at me with a grin; I smiled at them as cheerfully as I could contrive; they averted their eyes in cold hostility. Two coal-heavers and a ship's steward who had drifted into the shop finished their drinks and drifted out again. The God had for the hundredth time clinched without attempting to hit. Each time that he clinched he wiped his bleeding cheek on the ganger's coat.

I cannot be strictly accurate as to the time which that fight lasted; it had been in progress for many minutes before a sudden remembrance of my duties as a civilised

citizen caused me to consult my watch; but after that, to my certain knowledge, they fought, without respite, without quarter asked or given, for thirty-seven minutes. Anyone who has sparred three gentlemanly two-minute rounds, with a minute's rest between each of them, will appreciate this detail.

The ending was dramatic. The God had grown increasingly defensive and elusive, and his methods had obviously incurred the disapproval of even the impartial proprietor of the shop.

"Stan' up an' fight like a man, yeh louse!" said the ganger indignantly. Whereupon the God smiled, and emitted through his thickened and bleeding lips an obscene noise. The ganger, incensed to rashness, advanced with a rush; the God side-stepped the rush, pivoted his whole body on his left foot, raised his right knee and swung his right hand to his enemy's chin. Both knee and hand got home squarely; the ganger collapsed limply, pitching sideways and forward to the floor, where he lay motionless, his face flattened into the sawdust.

"Jee!" said the master of the ceremonies, and sucked his teeth, genuinely interested.

The God stood for a little space, warily, looking down upon his fallen foe, his nostrils twitching, his shoulders rising and falling a little. No one spoke or moved. After some moments the ganger moaned faintly; the God turned away; one of the ganger's two friends rose and picked up the ganger's cap from the floor. It was a tacit admission of defeat, which the God accepted as tacitly; he wiped his face with the wet duster and surveyed the result with solicitude in a mirror formed by the lid of a tin biscuit-box. Doubtless he foresaw domestic reproaches.

"Lemme up," said the ganger, much to my relief, when some more silent moments had passed. His friends helped him to his feet, and, supported by their arms, he stood, one hand to his forehead, swaying unsteadily.

"Will yeh shake hands, O'Nale?" asked the God, gravely, from his place by the counter.

O'Neill hesitated, then freed himself from his friends and held out his huge fist.

"Yeh dam near done for me, O'Reilly," he said rather tremulously, "dam near. I'm a sick man this minit."

They shook hands. "Ah, yeh'll be all right in a jiff," said the God amiably. "Yeh're too bloomin' tough for to take much harm that easy. Sit yeh down there an' rest yerself a while."

As he spoke he slipped his arm into the ganger's and half-led, half-carried him over to the bench along the wall. Then he looked at me significantly.

The ganger's friends followed me out into the street.

"Best lave 'em be thimsels f'r a bit," said one.

"Ai," said the other, rolling his quid; "they'll lick one nuther's sores."

The Maggot*

By Henri Fabre

In the warm weather, the larvæ of the Bluebottle hatch within two days. Whether inside my apparatus, in direct contact with a piece of meat, or outside, on the edge of a slit that enables them to enter, they set to work at once. They do not eat, in the strict sense of the word, that is to say, they do not tear their food, do not chew it by means of implements of mastication. Their mouth-parts do not lend themselves to this work. These mouth-parts are two horny spikes, sliding one upon the other, with curved ends that do not face, thus excluding the possibility of any function such as seizing and grinding.

The two grapnels serve for walking much rather than for feeding. The worm plants them alternately in the road traversed and, by contracting its crupper, advances just that distance. It carries in its throat the equivalent of our iron-tipped sticks which give support and assist progress. Thanks to this machinery of the mouth, the maggot not only moves over the surface, but also easily penetrates the meat: I see it disappear as though it were dipping into butter. It cuts its way, levying, as it goes, a preliminary toll, but only of liquid mouthfuls. Not the smallest solid particle is detached and swallowed. That is not the maggot's diet. It wants a broth, a soup, a sort of fluid extract of beef which it prepares itself. As digestion, after all, merely means liquefaction, we may say, without being guilty of paradox, that the grub of the Bluebottle digests its food before swallowing it.

With the object of relieving gastric troubles, our manufacturing chemists scrape the stomachs of the Pig and Sheep and thus obtain pepsine, a digestive agent which

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possesses the property of liquefying albuminous matters and lean meat in particular. Why cannot they rasp the stomach of the maggot! They would obtain a product of the highest quality, for the carnivorous worm also owns its pepsine, pepsine of a singularly active kind, as the following experiments show..

I divide the white of a hard-boiled egg into tiny cubes and place them in a little test-tube. On the top of the contents, I sprinkle the eggs of the Bluebottle, eggs free from the least stain, taken from those laid on the outside of tins baited with meat and not absolutely shut. A similar test-tube is filled with white of egg, but receives no germs. Both are closed with a plug of cotton-wool and left in a dark corner.

In a few days, the tube swarming with new-born vermin contains a liquid as fluid and transparent as water. Not a drop would remain in the tube if I turned it upside down. All the white of egg has disappeared, liquefied. As for the worms, which are already a fair size, they seem very ill at ease. Deprived of a support whence to attain the outer air, most of them dive into the broth of their own making, where they perish by drowning. Others, endowed with greater vigour, crawl up the glass to the plug and manage to make their way through the wadding. Their pointed front, armed with grappling-irons, is the nail that penetrates the fibrous mass.

In the other test-tube, standing beside the first and subjected to the same atmospheric influences, nothing striking has occurred. The hard-boiled white of egg has retained its dead-white colour and its firmness. I find it as I left it. The utmost that I observe is some traces of mustiness. The result of this first experiment is patent: the Bluebottle's grub is the medium that converts coagulated albumen into a liquid.

The value of chemists' pepsine is estimated by the quantity of hard-boiled white of egg which a gramme of that agent is able to liquefy. The mixture has to be exposed in an oven to a temperature of 140° F. and also frequently shaken. My preparation, in which the Bluebottle's eggs are hatched, is neither shaken nor subjected to the heat of an oven; everything happens in quietness and under the thermometrical conditions of the surrounding

air; nevertheless, in a few days, the coagulated albumen, treated by the vermin, runs like water.

The agent that causes this liquefaction escapes my endeavours to detect it. The worms must disgorge it in infinitesimal doses, while the spikes in their throats, which are in continual movement, emerge a little way from the mouth, re-enter and reappear. Those piston-thrusts, those quasi-kisses, are accompanied by the emission of the solvent: at least, that is how I picture it. The maggot spits on its food, places on it the wherewithal to make it into broth. To appraise the quantity of the matter expectorated is beyond my powers: I observe the result, but do not perceive the leavening agent.

Well, this result is really astounding, when we consider the scantiness of the means. No Pig's or Sheep's pepsine can rival that of the worm. I have a bottle of pepsine that comes from the School of Chemistry at Montpellier. I lavishly powder some pieces of hard-boiled white of egg with the potent drug, just as I did with the eggs of the Bluebottle. The oven is not brought into play, neither is distilled water added, nor hydrochloric acid: two adjuvants which are recommended. The experiment is conducted in exactly the same way as that of the tubes with the vermin. The result is entirely different from what I expected. The white of egg does not liquefy. It simply becomes moist on the surface; and even this moisture may come from the pepsine, which is highly absorbent. Yes, I was right: if the thing were feasible, it would be an advantage for the chemists to collect their digestive drug from the stomach of the maggot. The worm, in this case, beats the Pig and the Sheep.

The same method is followed for the remaining experiments. I put the Bluebottle's eggs to hatch on a piece of meat and leave the worms to do their work as they please. The lean tissues, whether of mutton, beef or pork, no matter which, are not turned into liquid; they become a pea-soup of a clarety brown. The liver, the lung, the spleen are attacked to better purpose, without, however, getting beyond the state of a semi-fluid jam, which easily mixes with water and even appears to dissolve in it. The brains do not liquefy either: they simply melt into a thin gruel.

On the other hand, fatty substances, such as beef-suet, lard and butter, do not undergo any appreciable change. Moreover, the worms soon dwindle away, incapable of growing. This sort of food does not suit them. Why? Apparently because it cannot be liquefied by the agent disgorged by the worms. In the same way, ordinary pepsine does not attack fatty substances; it takes pancreatin to reduce them to an emulsion. This curious analogy of properties, positive for albuminous, negative for fatty matter, proclaims the similarity and perhaps the identity of the dissolvent discharged by the grubs and the pepsine of the higher animals.

Here is another proof: the usual pepsine does not dissolve the epidermis, which is a material of a horny nature. That of the maggots does not dissolve it either. I can easily rear Bluebottle-grubs on dead Crickets whose bellies I have first opened, but I do not succeed if the morsel be left intact: the worms are unable to perforate the succulent paunch; they are stopped by the cuticle, on which their reagent refuses to act. Or else I give them Frogs' hind-legs denuded of their skin. The flesh turns into broth and disappears to the bone. If I do not peel the legs, they remain intact in the midst of the vermin. Their thin skin is sufficient to protect them.

This failure to act upon the epidermis explains why the Bluebottle at work on the animal declines to lay her eggs on the first part that comes handy. She needs the delicate membranes of the nostrils, eyes or throat, or else some wound in which the flesh is laid bare. No other place suits her, however excellent for flavour and darkness. At most, finding nothing better when my stratagems interfere, she brings herself to dab a few eggs under the axilla of a plucked bird, or in the groin, two points at which the skin is thinner than elsewhere.

With her maternal foresight, the Bluebottle knows to perfection the choice surfaces, the only ones liable to soften and run under the influence of the agent dribbled by the new-born grubs. The chemistry to come is familiar to her, though she does not use it for her own feeding; motherhood, that great inspirer of instinct, teaches her all about it.

Scrupulous though she be in choosing exactly where to lay her eggs, the Bluebottle does not trouble about the

quality of the provisions intended for her family's consumption. Any dead body suits her purpose. Francesco Redi, the seventeenth-century Italian scientist who first exploded the old, foolish notion of worms begotten of corruption, fed the vermin in his laboratory with meat of very different kinds. In order to make his tests the more conclusive, he exaggerated the largess of the dining-hall. The diet was varied with tiger- and lion-flesh, bear and leopard, fox and wolf, mutton and beef, horse-flesh, donkey-flesh and many others, supplied by the rich menagerie of Florence. This wastefulness was unnecessary: wolf and mutton are all the same to an unprejudiced stomach.

A distant disciple of the maggot's biographer, I look at the problem in a light which Redi never dreamt of. Any flesh of one of the higher animals suits the Fly's family. Will it be the same if the food supplied be of a lower organism and consist of fish, for instance, of Frog, Mollusc, Insect, Centipede? Will the worms accept these viands and, above all, can they manage to liquefy them, which is the first and foremost condition?

I provide a piece of raw Whiting. The flesh is white, delicate, partly translucent, easy for our stomachs to digest and no less suited to the grub's dissolvent. It turns into an opalescent fluid, which runs like water. In fact, it liquefies in much the same way as hard-boiled white of egg. The worms at first wax fat, as long as the conditions allow of some solid eyots remaining; then, when foothold fails, threatened with drowning in the too-fluid broth, they creep up the side of the glass, anxious and restless to be off. They climb to the cotton-wool stopper of the test-tube and try to bolt through the wadding. Endowed with stubborn perseverance, nearly all of them decamp in spite of the obstacle. The test-tube with the white of egg showed me a similar exodus. Although the fare suits them, as their growth witnesses, the worms cease feeding and make a point of escaping when death by drowning is imminent.

With other fish, such as Skate and Sardines, with the flesh of Frogs and Tree-frogs, the meat simply dissolves into a porridge. Hashes of Slug, Centipede or Praying Mantis furnish the same result.

In all these preparations, the dissolving-agent of the worms is as much in evidence as when butcher's meat is

employed. Moreover, the grubs seem satisfied with the queer dish which my curiosity prescribes for them; they thrive in the midst of the victuals and undergo their transformation into pupæ.

The conclusion, therefore, is much more general than Redi imagined. Any meat, no matter whether of a higher or lower order, suits the Bluebottle for the settlement of her family. The carcases of furred and feathered animals are the favourite victuals, probably because of their richness, which allows of plentiful layings; but, should occasion demand it, the others also are accepted without inconvenience. All carrion that has lived the life of an animal comes within the domain of these scavengers.

What is their number to one mother? I have already spoken of a deposit of three hundred, counted egg by egg. A quite fortuitous circumstance enabled me to go much further. In the first week of January, 1905, we experienced a sudden, short cold snap of a severity very exceptional in my part of the country. The thermometer fell to twelve degrees below zero, C. While a fierce north wind was raging and beginning to redden the leaves of the olive-trees, came one and brought me a Barn- or Screech-owl, which he had found lying on the ground, exposed to the air, not far from my house. My reputation as a lover of animals made the donor believe that I should be pleased with his gift. I was, as a matter of fact, but for reasons whereof the finder never dreamt. The Owl was untouched, with trim feathers and not the least wound that showed. Perhaps he had died of cold. What made me gratefully accept the present was exactly that which would have inclined any one but myself to refuse it. The Owl's eyes, glazed in death, were hidden under a thick mass of eggs, which I recognised as a Bluebottle's. Similar masses occupied the vicinity of the nostrils. If I wanted maggots, here, of a certainty, was a richer crop than I had ever beheld.

I place the corpse on the sand of a pan, with a wire-gauze cover, and leave events to take their course. The laboratory in which I install my bird is none other than my study. It is as cold in there, or nearly, as outside. Under these conditions, the Owl's eyes keep their white veil of germs unchanged. Nothing stirs, nothing swarms. Weary of waiting, I pay no more attention to the carcass; I leave

the future to decide whether the cold has exterminated the Fly's family or not.

Before the end of March, the packets of eggs have disappeared, I know not how long. The bird, for that matter, seems to be intact. On the ventral surface, which is turned to the air, the feathers keep their smooth arrangement and their fresh colouring. I lift the thing. It is light, very dry and gives a hard sound, like an old shoe tanned by the summer sun in the fields. There is no smell. The dryness has vanquished the stench, which, in any case, was never offensive during that time of frost. On the other hand, the back, which touched the sand, is a loathsome wreck, partly deprived of its feathers. The quills of the tail are bare-barrelled; a few whitened bones show, deprived of their muscles. The skin has turned into a dark leather, pierced with round holes like those in a sieve. It is all hideously ugly, but most instructive.

The wretched Owl, with his shattered backbone, teaches us, first of all, that a temperature of twelve degrees of frost does not endanger the existence of the Bluebottle's germs. The worms are born without accident, despite the rude blast; they feasted copiously on extract of meat; then, growing big and fat, they descended into the earth by piercing round holes in the bird's skin. Their pupæ must now be in the sand of the pan.

They are, in point of fact, and in such numbers that I have to resort to sifting in order to collect them. If I used the forceps, I should never have done sorting so great a quantity. The sand passes through the meshes of the sieve, the pupæ remain above. To count them would wear out my patience. I measure them by the bushel, that is to say, with a thimble of which I know the holding capacity in pupæ. The result of my calculation is not far short of nine hundred.

Does this family proceed from one mother? I am quite ready to admit it, so unlikely is it that the Bluebottle, who is so rare inside our houses during the severe cold of winter, should be frequent enough outside to form groups and do business in common while an icy blast is raging. A belated specimen, the plaything of the north wind, and one alone must have deposited the burden of her ovaries on the Owl's eyes. This laying of nine hundred

eggs, an incomplete laying perhaps, bears witness to the mighty part played by the Fly as a liquidator of corpses.

Before throwing away the Screech-owl treated by the worms, let us overcome our repugnance and give a glance inside the bird. We see a tortuous cavity, fenced in by nameless ruins. Muscles and bowels have disappeared, converted into broth and gradually consumed by the teeming throng. In every part what was wet has become dry, what was solid muddy. In vain my forceps ransacks every nook and corner: it does not hit upon a single pupa. All the worms have emigrated, all, without exception. From first to last, they have forsaken the refuge of the corpse, so soft to their delicate skins; they have left the velvet for the hard ground. Is dryness necessary to them at this stage? They had it in the carcass, which was thoroughly drained. Would they protect themselves against the cold and rain? No shelter could suit them better than the thick quilt of the feathers, which has remained wholly undamaged on the belly, the breast and every part that was not in touch with the ground. It looks as though they had fled from comfort to seek a less kindly dwelling-place. When the hour of transformation came, all left the Owl, that most excellent lodging; all dived into the sand.

The exodus from the mortuary tabernacle was made through the round holes wherewith the skin is pierced. Those holes are the worms' work: of that there is no doubt; and yet we have lately seen the mothers refuse as a bed for their eggs any part whereat the flesh is protected by a skin of any thickness. The reason is the failure of the pepsine to act upon epidermic substances. In the absence of liquefaction at such points, the nourishing gruel is unprocurable. On the other hand, the tiny worms are not able—or, at least, do not know how—to dig through the integument with their mouth-spikes, to rend it and reach the liquefiable flesh. The new-born lack strength and, above all, purpose. But, as the time comes for descending into the earth, the worms, now powerful and suddenly versed in the necessary art, well know how to eat away patiently and clear themselves a passage. With the hooks of their spikes they dig, scratch and tear. Instinct has flashes of inspiration. What the animal did not know how to do at the start it learns without apprenticeship, when

the time comes to practise this or that industry. The maggot ripe for burial perforates a membranous obstacle which the worm, intent upon its broth, would not even have attempted to attack with either its pepsine or its grapnels.

Why does the worm quit the carcass, that capital shelter? Why does it go and take up its abode in the ground? As the leading disinfector of dead things, it works at the chief object, the suppression of the infection; but it leaves a plentiful residuum, which does not yield to the reagents of its analytical chemistry. These remains have to disappear in their turn. After the Fly, dissectors arrive, who take up the dry relic, nibble skin, tendons and ligaments and scrape the bones clean.

The greatest expert in this work is the Dermestes, or Bacon-beetle, an enthusiastic gnawer of animal remains. Sooner or later, he will come to the joint already exploited by the Fly. Now what would happen if the pupæ were there? The answer is obvious. The Dermestes, who loves hard food, would dig his teeth into the horny little kegs and demolish them at a bite. Even though he did not touch the contents, a live thing which he probably dislikes, he would at least test the flavour of that lifeless substance, the container. The future Fly would be lost, because her casing would be pierced. Even so, in the store-rooms of our silk-mills, a certain Dermestes (*Dermestes vulpinus*, Fabr.) digs into the cocoons to attack the horny covering of the chrysalis.

The maggot foresees the danger and makes itself scarce before the other arrives. In what sort of memory does it house so much wisdom, indigent, headless creature that it is, for it is only by extension that we can give the name of head to the animal's pointed fore-part? How did it learn that, to safeguard the pupa, it must desert the carcass and that, to safeguard the Fly, it must not bury itself too far down?

To emerge from underground after the perfect insect is hatched, the Bluebottle's device consists in disjointing her head into two movable halves which, each distended with its great red eye, by turns separate and reunite. In the intervening space, a large glassy hernia rises and disappears, disappears and rises. When the two move asunder, with one eye forced back to the right, the other to the left, it

is as though the insect were splitting its brain-pan in order to expel the contents. Then the hernia rises, blunt at the end and swollen into a great knob. Next, the forehead closes and the hernia retreats, leaving visible only a kind of shapeless muzzle. In short, a frontal pouch, with deep pulsations momentarily renewed, becomes the instrument of deliverance, the pestle wherewith the newly-hatched Bluebottle bruises the sand and causes it to crumble. Gradually the legs push the rubbish back and the insect advances so much towards the surface.

A hard task, this exhumation by dint of blows of a cleft and palpitating head. Moreover, the exhausting effort has to be made at the moment of greatest weakness, when the insect leaves that protecting casket, its pupa. It emerges from it pale, flabby, unsightly, sorrily clad in the wings which, folded lengthwise and made shorter by their scalloped edge, only just cover the top of the back. The large set of wings, suitable for flight, will spread later. For the moment, it would only be in the way amid the obstacles to be passed through. Later also will come the faultless dress wherein the iridescent indigo-blue stands out against the severity of the black.

The frontal hernia that crumbles the sand with its impact has a tendency to make play for some time after the emergence from the ground. Take hold with the forceps of one of the hind-legs of the Fly newly-released. Forthwith the implement of the head begins to work, swelling and subsiding as energetically as a moment ago, when it had to make a hole in the sand. The insect, when hampered in its movements as it was underground, struggles as best it can against the only obstacle that it knows. With its heaving knob, it pounds the air just as erstwhile it pounded the earthy barrier. In all unpleasant circumstances, its one resource is to cleave its head and produce its cranial hernia, which moves out and in, in and out. For nearly two hours, interspersed with halts due to fatigue, the little machine keeps throbbing in my forceps.

In the meantime, however, the desperate one is hardening her skin; she spreads wide the sail of her wings and dons her deep mourning of black and darkest blue. Then her eyes, warped sideways, come together and resume their normal position. The cleft forehead closes; the delivering

blister goes in, never to show itself again. But there is one precaution to be taken first. With its front tarsi, the insect carefully brushes the bump about to disappear from view, lest grit should lodge in the cranium when the two halves of the head are joined for good.

The maggot is aware of the trials that await it when, as a Fly, it will have to come up from under ground; it knows beforehand how difficult the ascent will be with the feeble instrument at its disposal, so difficult, in fact, as to become fatal should the journey be at all prolonged. It foresees the dangers ahead of it and averts them as well as it can. Gifted with two iron-shod sticks in its throat, it can easily descend to such depths as it pleases. The need for greater quiet and a less trying temperature calls for the deepest possible home: the lower down it is, the better for the welfare of the worm and the pupa, on condition that descent be practicable. It is, perfectly; and yet, though free to obey its inspiration, the grub refrains. I rear it in a deep pan, full of fine, dry sand, easy to excavate. The interment never goes very far. About a hand's-breadth is all that the most progressive digger ventures upon. Most of the interred remain nearer still to the surface. Here, under a thin layer of sand, the grub's skin hardens and becomes a coffin, a casket, wherein the transformation-sleep is slept. A few weeks later, the buried one awakes, transfigured, but weak, having naught wherewith to unearth itself but the throbbing hernia of its open forehead.

What the maggot denies itself it is open to me to realise, should I care to know the depth whence the Fly is able to mount. I place fifteen Bluebottle-pupæ, obtained in winter, at the bottom of a wide tube closed at one end. Above the pupæ is a perpendicular column of fine, dry sand, the height of which varies in different tubes. April comes and the hatching begins.

The tube with $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches of sand, the shallowest of the columns under experiment, yields the best result. Of the fifteen subjects interred in the pupal stage, fourteen easily reach the surface when they become Flies. Only one of them perishes, one who has not even attempted the ascent. With 5 inches of sand, four emerge. With 8 inches, two, no more. The other Flies, jaded with their exertions, have died at a higher or lower stage of the road.

Lastly, with yet another tube, wherein the column of sand measured 24 inches, I obtained the liberation of only a single Fly. The plucky creature must have had a hard struggle to mount from so great a depth, for the other fourteen did not even manage to burst the lid of their caskets.

I presume that the looseness of the sand and the consequent pressure in every direction, similar to that exercised by fluids, have a certain bearing on the difficulties of the exhumation. Two more tubes are prepared, but this time supplied with fresh mould, lightly heaped up, which has not the incoherence of sand, with the attendant drawback of pressure. Here, $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches of mould give me eight Flies for fifteen pupæ buried; 8 inches give me only one. There is less success than with the sandy column. My device has diminished the pressure, but, at the same time, increased the passive resistance. The sand falls of itself under the impact of the frontal rammer; the unyielding mould demands the cutting of a gallery. In fact, I perceive, on the road followed, a shaft which continues indefinitely such as it is. The Fly has bored it with the temporary blister that throbs between her eyes.

In every medium, therefore, whether sand, mould or any earthy combination, great are the sufferings that attend the exhumation of the Fly. And so the maggot shuns the depths which a desire for additional security might seem to recommend. The worm has its own prudence: foreseeing the dangers ahead, it refrains from making great descents that might promote the welfare of the moment. It neglects the present for the sake of the future.

Phonetics and Poetry

By Lascelles Abercrombie

THE same species of intellect seldom does equally well in investigating the theory of a science and in guiding the practical use of the theory; indeed, if we put "never" for "seldom," we shall have a law not much more fallible than the laws of science herself. We should hardly expect the chemist, who brings some obscure elemental affinity into clear light, to be the successful patentee of a new manufacturing process; the instance of Dr. Mond merely emphasises the rarity of the double ability. This, however, or its parallel, is precisely what we do seem to expect in the matter of phonetics and their main practical application of phonetic spelling. Every theoretical phonetician regards himself as a possible, or, rather, as the probable, Ludwig Mond of phonetic spelling; he has simply to apply the results of his theoretical investigations in order to reform the written practice of language as successfully as that great chemist reformed the manufacture of alkali. And the most of us, except those who utterly abhor all notion of phonetic spelling whatever, are inclined to agree with him. Yet the imposition of theoretical phonetics on the practice of language must take account of subtle, unapparent forces far more disturbing and confounding than anything likely to occur when a laboratory experiment is transferred to huge furnaces not easily controlled and immense masses of substance. Unfortunately, it is just here that our simile must break down; for hitherto the attempts at phonetic spelling have not merely miscalculated the effects of the strange forces inherent in actual language; they have absolutely ignored them. And doubtless the vehement prejudice in the minds of most cultured persons against any approach to phonetic spelling is largely due to the dismal results of that ignorance.

It is high time, in fact, for phonetic spelling to be taken out of the hands of the theorists. Phonetics as a pure

science have prospered considerably with them, especially of late years; they have done their work well, but a good deal obviously remains for them to do, with which let their activities be content. For they are not the men to make successful application of that work of theirs. If phonetic spelling is really desirable, and if it is to be something that will not desperately hamper the genius of our language in a base materialistic doctrine, it must be perfected by those who, by training and instinct, are finely aware of the genius of English—persons in whose minds words are not tokens of things thought, but are themselves thoughts, alive with power of their own. We must also considerably raise the aim of phonetic spelling before we decide whether it be genuinely necessary. We must have in our minds something better than indulgence for the puzzled wits of foreigners or the tender brains of children. Nor in itself is the discrepancy between our spelling and our pronunciation such a terrible matter; at least, the mere fact that this discrepancy offends the sense of propriety in certain minds cannot be anything like an adequate motive for reformed spelling. We must require phonetic spelling for the gravest possible reason before we can be justified in attacking the written practice of English; we must, in fact, prove that it would be beneficial in some way to language in its highest capacity—namely, to language when it is poetic, using the word in its widest meaning. And if we can prove that, it still remains to take the utmost care that we do not adopt any phonetic system likely to do counterbalancing violence to the poetic power of language in other ways.

Doubtless the reader has already been busy with his objections. Is it not notorious that the men who are here required to be the real devisers of phonetic spelling, the men who are susceptible to the poetic value of English, are precisely those most bitterly hostile to the mere notion of phonetic spelling? And they are hostile for good reason; for is it not further notorious that if you want to make phonetic spelling ridiculous, all you have to do is to write out in it some well-known passage of poetry? Well, fortunately, what is notorious is not always true. The greatest of living poets, Mr. Robert Bridges, has recently formulated a scheme of English phonetic spelling; and, though the scheme is avowedly tentative, it is immeasurably the most

important step that has yet been taken towards a tolerable and even desirable reform of written and printed English. Mr. Bridges was forced to devise his system by "sad occasion"; by the perception that unless something of the kind be adopted, English is terribly likely to lose a large part of its marvellous poetic power. And, being a system in which, for the first time, phonetic methods are scrupulously controlled by conscience for the genius of the language, it is carefully devised to inflict as little violence as possible. I propose in this paper to describe something of the "bitter constraint" which is working to drive poetry into an alliance with phonetics; and next, to indicate briefly and in quite general fashion what poetry has specially to fear from that alliance, and how, if it strikes the treaty in the terms proposed by Mr. Bridges, it may avoid the disaster which befell the Britons when they called in the help of Hengist and Horsa against the Picts. I shall inevitably introduce views and opinions of my own; but anyone who is properly interested in the matter will do wisely to consult Mr. Bridges' own statement of his system; it is to be found in the collection of Essays and Studies by members of the English Association, issued at Oxford in 1910.

The word poetry, as it stands in the sentences I have just written, must be taken, of course, broadly; I mean by it something that can only be expressed by a more or less clumsy periphrasis, such as the poetic power, or poetic value, of language; the essential vitality of language, which is most typically visible in what we ordinarily call poetry, but which is the main element in all prose not simply intended as the machinery of reason. "Language as an æsthetic medium" would perhaps serve our turn, unless the connotation of "æsthetic" be too confused; language, at any rate, in which words have, and are intended to have, their own powers and relationships of power, beyond what the reasonable sense imposes on them. This is the divine faculty of language at its divinest. And the primal element of such language is the spoken word; not the word as the philologists take it, nor the printed ideogram, the subtly suggestive group of letters which is, too often, the first presentation of a word to a mind cultured by literature; but the word spoken—"sweet articulate words sweetly divided apart." The sound of language is the first origin of its significance;

and if the sound of it be debased, that is, if it be slurred to a lazy uniformity instead of a rich and full variety, it must of necessity be that the significance of the language will also be debased. The whole of the language, sense and sound alike, must become slack and lazy together. This is not theory; it is simple truth to anyone who can feel words as something more than counters for the reason to play with. And instances of it can be seen in England to-day. In the North they speak a tongue full of varying vowels and deliberate consonants; even in the manufacturing towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire, where the dialect is certainly harsh, the vigour of the speech is shown by the number of full-valued, sharply defined vowels. But in London, and throughout the whole of the Cockney South, the increasing tendency is to gabble consonants, to let one vowel sound infect another, to speak with as little effort as possible, by reducing speech as near as may be to a stream of uniform vowels spattered with slurred consonants. And no one who has lived among both peoples can doubt that the English language is a vastly more significant affair to the dalesmen of Cumberland than it is to the inhabitants of London. Debased sound means debased significance. It may be, the unconscious dislike of effort which spoils the speaking of language insidiously attacks also the mental use of language; but I think rather that the connection of sound to sense is even closer: that, the sounded word being the primal element of language, the mental value of the word is irrefragably fastened to it.

Now, the sound of English, the pronunciation of English, has always been continually altering; and this alteration is largely independent of the spelling of English, because there is no instinct to relate our spelling with our pronunciation; there is, on the contrary, a strong instinct to regard the two as quite separate existences. But we must distinguish two kinds in the alteration to which such a tongue as English, with an almost arbitrary spelling, is liable. There is the continuous development in the pronunciation of "good English," which has turned the speech of Chaucer into the speech of Shakespeare, and that again into the speech of the present day. This is pretty well understood. It has a certain slight tendency to uniformity; certain internal and terminal aspirates, for instance, have

been gradually dropped, though maintained in spelling; but on the whole the sum of the alterations leaves the spoken language as varied and as rich in sound as in the preceding age. And this means, broadly, that the language preserves its vigour and significance. Though the speech subject to this kind of alteration is what we usually call "good English" (or the King's English), it is broadly distributed throughout our population. In country places not seriously contaminated by towns and Board School education (they are still to be found), this speech is recognisable in the mouths of gentry, farmers and peasantry alike—a speech of fully modulated, complex pronunciation, the speech which is the original substance of poetic English. But there is another kind of alteration in the sound of English, and this works in a much more obscure way. It is doubtless not a phenomenon peculiar to our own time, though little is known of its appearance in the past, since it has scarcely influenced the two main persistent streams of pure English, the speech of cultured persons and the speech of country-folk in uncontaminated districts.

Of this second species of alteration in the sound of English, however, we know only too much to-day. It seems to be the especial possession of what we are assured is the mainstay of our national prosperity, the middle classes of the towns. It is most noticeable in the towns of the South and the Midlands, and London is its headquarters; but the urban North is by no means free from it, indeed, in a few northern towns (Liverpool, for instance) it is as bad as anywhere else. This is the tendency towards the slurred, lazy uniformity of sound which we have already noticed. It possesses, very possibly, the speech of the majority of English people to-day; but that does not make it any less horrible. To show how far the tendency towards uniformity has already gone, a small list of typical deformations will suffice; thus, *and*, *from*, *to*, *but*, *for*, and *than* have become, certainly in unaccented positions, *ernd*, *frerm*, *ter*, *bert*, *fer*, and *thern*. This is not phantasy; it is authorised by a standard text-book of phonetics; and a short walk through the streets of London will convince any candid person with alert hearing that it is the mere truth. Again, *go* and *now* are pronounced as perfect rhymes; and neither vowel sound is given the value it would have in the North; a lazy

uniformity has been found by hitting a sound about midway between the two. This also is a typical deformation.

Speech of this lazy, poorly modulated, indeterminate pronunciation is, as I have said, probably the speech of the majority to-day; and that, in these democratic times, constitutes its enormous danger to poetic English. For, without doubt, degradation in sound-value corresponds pretty nearly with degradation in mental value; the former is largely symptomatic of the latter. It seems to me unlikely that this tendency towards a slack uniformity in pronunciation is entirely a modernism. I should say that urban middle-class English has always been the least modulated, and the least significant; though the tendency has perhaps been pushed forwards of recent years by education. And, if there were no artificial interference, the significant, fully pronounced English would perhaps maintain itself against the enemy as it has done hitherto. But that is where the special danger comes in nowadays; here we arrive at the threatened calamity that has forced Mr. Bridges, a poet, to formulate, in the interests of poetic English, a system of phonetic spelling, a thing most of us regard as strongly inimical to the poetic power of language. For the contest between full pronunciation and half-pronunciation is not being left to itself; phonetics, scientific phonetics, have upset the balance, and are apparently doing their utmost to ensure the triumph of the laziest and ugliest deformation of English.

Besides confounding the two kinds of alteration which affect language—the gradual changes in fully pronounced English on the one hand, and on the other hand the tendency towards slurred uniformity infecting the hurried speech of the urban middle classes—those who assert that English must be left to fight out its own salvation without interference, forget that phonetics have arrived, and underestimate the great and increasing influence phonetics are likely to have in the future. Nothing is more shallow or unphilosophic than the assumption that in the affairs of human society things must be left to take their "natural" course, that "artificial" interference with "evolution" is vain. In human society there is nothing either "natural" or "artificial"; there is simply human effort, conscious or unconscious, and it is the absurdest mistake in the world to

suppose that conscious effort cannot take the lead of unconscious. Man is a creature of sin; that is the whole point of his being. He is what he is because he can "interfere" with his own instinctive evolution and the blind evolution of the external world. If it is plain that instinctive evolution is killing the significance and poetic power of language, then it is time for us to "sin" against that instinctive evolution, to wrest it aside and make it go as our conscious desires would have it But the scientific phoneticians have already "sinned" against the evolution of our language; it is they who are rapidly getting conscious control of its instincts, and it is really their conscious control, reinforcing the evil half in the conflict of instinctive evolutionary forces, that is going to do irreparable damage to the full vitality of English. If that is not to happen, we must replace their scientific sin by an æsthetic sin, such a one as Mr. Bridges' scheme of phonetic spelling; just as the sin of asceticism has sometimes been necessary to conquer the sin of fleshly luxury.

And what is it that the scientific phoneticians have been doing? It can be briefly stated. Having perfected their methods, they conceived it desirable to employ those methods in fixing a "standard" of English pronunciation. Being scientists, and imbued with the modern scientific notion that first in numbers must be first in right, they proceeded to fix the "standard" English pronunciation by setting down in phonetic terms the pronunciation of the majority, or what appeared to be the majority; namely, the pronunciation of the Cockney South. A northerner can only marvel at the astounding notion that the slurred gabble of the London streets must be the standard of English speech; but it seems to be one of the chief heads in the phonetician's creed. Thus, in the most important book on the subject published in the last few years, a book professing to give "pronunciation used in careful conversation," pronunciation, moreover, "recommended for the use of foreigners," we may find the following specimens of phonetic standardisations:—

affection	to be	pronounced	*erfecshern*
supposed	,,	,,	*serposed*
produce	,,	,,	*prerduce*
character	,,	,,	*charercter;*

and so on. Now this book is in actual educational use, both at home and abroad; and others to a similar purport will follow. Phoneticians will soon arrive, if they have not already arrived, at the perfection of a definite common "standard" of English pronunciation; and it will be the slack, unmodulated, debased speech of the half-educated, wholly uncultivated Cockney middle-class South. The slurred gabble, unalterably fixed in horrible phonetic symbols as the "standard," will be deliberately fostered throughout England; for we shall go very far wrong if we dispute the increasing importance of phonetics in our educational system. The complete prevalence of the phonetician's standard of English speech becomes then only a matter of time. And it is not only the noble sound of English that will be lost; the process cannot stop short at turning the rich complexity of full pronunciation into a few lazy vowels and mumbled consonants. A nation with a degraded language in its mouth has a degraded language in its mind. As may easily be seen from those who at present use the "standard" speech, a half-pronounced English means an insignificant English, a language only half alive. If the phoneticians have their way, and succeed in reducing spoken English generally to a nerveless uniformity, we may still preserve a tongue that will do well for ordering goods, or for stating racing results in the newspapers, or for writing scientific text-books; but the essential vitality will fade out of it. For the vast majority the poetic power of English will be dead, or incurably crippled. Is there a remedy, or is it too late?

The crowning triumph of the scientific phoneticians' work will be when they no longer lock up their authoritative pronunciation in the obscure mystery of their symbols, but devise an easy and practicable phonetic alphabet in which the plain man may write and read his dreadful "standard" English. Then indeed there will be no escape. But the phoneticians are not there yet; and, though the making of their phonetic alphabet will be no great matter, owing to the level uniformity of their "standard" pronunciation, it is pretty certain that they are still a long way from this triumph of theirs. So that there is yet time to devise a remedy for what, without it, must inevitably come. And the remedy can be nothing else than the introduction of

a system of phonetic spelling capable of enclosing without violence the best,. that is the fullest, pronunciation of English at the present day; such a system as that put forward by Mr. Robert Bridges. If such a system were generally adopted, there would follow an instinct to perceive and to act on a fixed and complete relation between spelling and pronunciation; and the preservation of a fully modulated speech would be automatic; whereas now, the instinct being all the other way, pronunciation is left to the chance influences of environment—and to the phoneticians. It might even lead to reviving certain pronunciations which have been lost. If, for example, *right* were in this phonetic system spelt, as it would have to be, with some indication of the internal aspirate, to avoid confusion with *rite*, it would probably lead to the sounding of the internal aspirate, which would be clear gain. We might at least by this means banish the odious southern *wat* and *wen* and *wy*. An instance of the strong effect of spelling, instinctively recognised as phonetic, on pronunciation may occur to those who have had political arguments in "Welsh" Wales. Most Welshmen speak of Mr. Chămberlain, with the "a" of *rat*; they must hear plenty of Saxons saying Chāmberlain with the "a" of *fate*; but, Welsh being spelt almost phonetically, they cannot help pronouncing the vowel as their own spelling compels them.

In a word, we must steal the phoneticians' thunder. We must forestall them with a phonetic alphabet scrupulously moulded to suit the æsthetic genius of the language. Hitherto we have been considering the spoken word as the basis of poetry; and it has been shown, I hope, that there is something very cogent to be said for compelling the printed word into stricter obedience to the spoken word. But poetry is not only the spoken word; one must be a narrow-witted doctrinaire indeed to ignore the enormous importance of the printed word in it. The invention of printing has added a faculty to the mind, of which poetry has taken advantage to gain effects of subtlety and suggestion impossible before. The printed word, in fact, has its own power and its own function in poetry. And it is just here that phonetic spelling seems likely to do such cruel damage. This is not simply in the way of altering the familiar look of the printed word. I cannot understand

how that in itself should trouble anyone who has read, as everyone ought to have read, Chaucer and Spenser in the original spelling; and familiarity would be as easily attained, and as pleasant when attained, in one system as in another. Nevertheless, the sheer spelling of a word is a thing of grave æsthetic importance. Indeed, I think the subtle appeal of spelling to the eye is not sufficiently considered. I think *horrour* a more significant word than *horror;* and I am certain that authors who, either by reason of the custom of their times or of their own wilfulness, did not recognise an iron precision of spelling, sometimes deliberately used variant spellings for the sake of this subtle visual significance. Blake, for instance, probably called his poem "The Tyger," and not "The Tiger," because he felt (and surely we must feel with him) that *tyger* was in some queer way more symbolic of his tremendous vision than the more ordinary *tiger*. It seems to me that Mr. Bridges' system is sufficiently elastic even to allow this sort of thing. But this is not the main question.

The difficulty is to find a system which will be radical —genuinely and strictly representative of the spoken sound —and yet not such as too violently to upset and tyrannise over the received method of English spelling, certainly an important element in the genius of the language; incidentally also, the system must be easy to read. Let us take it, for instance, that the diphthong in *vein* is the correct phonetic representation of the required vowel-sound; are we therefore to spell all words in which this vowel-sound occurs with this diphthong? That would indeed be for phonetics to tyrannise over the genius of the language; we should have escaped the bitter tyranny of the barbarous Picts only by calling in the tyranny of the scarcely less barbarous Saxons. To mention one thing only: we should have practically wiped out of the printed language all the confusions of etymological relationship which are often so exceedingly important in the æsthetic of English. This tyranny is inevitable if our phonetic system attempts to work with the ordinary modern fount of type. Mr. Bridges, perceiving this, has modified the fount in a way that is as courageous as it is astonishingly ingenious; and the result is that he has achieved the apparently impossible in producing an alphabet genuinely phonetic, capable of preserving

the æsthetic value of spelling, and, furthermore, perfectly easy to read—immense advantages that completely counterbalance the disadvantage of inevitable, but not undue, complexity. But the nature of the system makes it impossible for me to describe it fully here; I can only barely indicate the manner of its working. Consider again the vowel-sound of *vein;* this occurs in *slave*. Mr. Bridges, by an ingenious ligature of *e* and *i*, has contrived a new but completely *recognisable* symbol for *a*; and wherever the *a* of *slave* occurs, he prints it in this new letter. Phonetics are satisfied; and the spelling is preserved, both in its convenient familiarity and its æsthetic value. He has, further, two more *a*'s, the *a* of *man* and the *a* of *father*, and in addition the diphthongal *a* of *all*; and these are slight but perfectly recognisable modifications of ordinary letter-forms. The whole alphabet, wherever necessary, is treated in a corresponding way. The result, of course, is a very large alphabet; but anyone who will study it in Mr. Bridges' essay will soon see that this result is only slightly objectionable. For the whole point of the system has been to add distinguishing marks of variable sound-value to the letters without very noticeably altering their shape. Thus, the several *a*'s are all immediately recognisable as *a*'s; at the same time, their differing values may be recognised with equal ease. The printed shape of the word is not seriously affected; the shape, in fact, is admirably humoured into a real phonetic symbol. It was found convenient to work on a basis of Saxon letters; but there is no reason why the alphabet should not be made more nearly conformable with ordinary type.

Obviously, this achieves all the purpose of, while avoiding all the *horrours* of, strict phonetic spelling. Mr. Bridges, as might be expected, really knows more about phonetics than the phoneticians. The latter make the final *y* in words like *happy* the same as the *i* of *hit*; but Mr. Bridges preserves a separate symbol for the final *y*, knowing it to be of different quantity. In a word, the system, though properly strict, is also properly liberal where that is desirable. One more illustration of it must suffice. Words with the soft *g*, like *gentle*, come off very badly in phonetics; for, if we stick to the ordinary letters, we can only make the sound by the atrocious combination *dzh*; so that we must

write *dzhentl*, and remove the word at once from all etymological relationship. Mr. Bridges has two distinct but perfectly recognisable *g*'s, the *g* of *gentle* and the *g* of *begin*; and thus the soft *g* is preserved from violence and the value of the historic spelling kept. But there is also a *j* of the same sound in *justice*; and Mr. Bridges maintains this letter also, thus most desirably keeping the printed word in communication with its past. In all other systems of phonetic spelling each word is thrust into its phonetic value as if into a sort of vacuum; Mr. Bridges' system alone is entirely efficient phonetically without perceptibly hampering the spirit of the language.

There are imperfections in the system, which intelligent criticism will help to remove; and the best thing we may wish it is that it may meet with the criticism it deserves—criticism that is æsthetic in purpose as well as scientific. But as it stands now, it is the only phonetic system that could possibly be approved by those whose approval is pre-eminently important,—those who know language not merely as an engine of knowledge, but as an engine of power also.

Tregonnoc

By D. G. Browne

It was on the fourth day of his flight that Tregonnoc was roused from his stupor of despair by a sense of familiarity and welcome in the air about him. He could not trace it to any obvious source, to any blossom or house or view; the trees were no different from the trees of an hour ago, nor was the grass more green; the change was too subtle for the ordinary senses to discern. It was everywhere, and yet, when he sought for it, it was nowhere. It wrought upon his nerves like a tonic, so that his sunken eyes grew more alert and his shambling walk more brisk. And presently, when the footpath he was following wound its way out from among the scattered coppices which for so long had circumscribed his view, he saw, far away and delicately blue like turquoise, the long rolling outline of the moors dancing in the midsummer heat. And somewhere among them his home lay.

Not that he any longer had a home to go to; but when he fled suddenly by night from London he took instinctively the great West road. Plans he then had none: those he had so meticulously elaborated were become, through his folly and ill-fortune, so many impossibilities; but amid this wreckage of his dispositions there stood out like a beacon the prospect of shelter in his own land. And now, when he saw it once more after so many years, he forgot his hunger, his terror, his weariness of body and soul; and, discarding the sheltered footpath, he pushed carelessly across the open country towards those inimitable uplands.

The afternoon was well advanced before he had left the cultivated country and begun to ascend the first great escarpment of the moors. The world now was very still and beautiful and empty of man's works; only a few sheep watched him from afar, a few rabbits leaped before him up

the hill, and two great gulls dropped swiftly seaward from the clouds. Along the crest of the ridge in front of him a crown of immemorial brambles bowed before the prevailing winds, and their grotesque and stunted silhouettes seemed to beckon to him like old friends. Old friends they were indeed: how often as a boy had he not climbed to them from the further valley, wondering (as he found himself wondering even now) why they had elected to take root in ground so intolerably exposed to all the winds of Heaven. As he drew near to them, they seemed to sway and creak and rustle with excitement, like a row of strange animals welcoming their master. And when he had passed through them and saw beyond that well-remembered carpet of green moorland rolling away into the West, he dropped at full length upon the ground and drank in the view as a thirsty man will drink in wine.

Of human life there was little indication in that landscape. A curve of white road passed over a distant ridge, a coil of smoke rose from a nearer hollow, and far away on the horizon the chimney of a disused tin mine pointed a moral for anyone who cared for morals. Great lumps of granite, like giants' bones, were strewn about the hillsides; and in the South a strip of sea glittered like white fire.

A fresh breeze was blowing out of the Atlantic; and over the curve of the world a sublime procession of clouds was continually advancing—large white clouds of solid and picturesque design, arranged in ranks like the battalions of an army in review, marching with military precision and pomp under the eye of the sun. And as they trooped eastward they dragged as many captive shadows below them, so that another and more soberly clad array was pouring like liquid over the undulations of the moor. Tregonnoc's weary eyes, which at first had explored that familiar country with such pathetic zest, were soon attracted and held by the onset of these regiments of shadows. Their movement was so swift and disciplined and human. They charged headlong into the valleys, they swept over the hills, they flung out skirmishers here or a column there, they seemed to contract and expand and alter their formation to suit the ground with all the flexibility of well-drilled bodies of soldiers. Continually their

speed seemed to increase and their bulk to grow more immense and indeterminate; and continually, line after line, their reserves appeared hurrying out of the West. . . . The effect of this ceaseless passage of phantoms was to hypnotise the mind; and presently it seemed to Tregonnoc that the whole earth was in movement—was heaving and disintegrating and melting together again.

Sometimes it happened that he lay in the track of one of these cloud shadows; and then it was most fascinating to watch it hurrying from afar, swooping, sliding, moving faster and faster, growing larger and larger, leaping from ridge to ridge, pouring like smoke into the valley at his feet, charging uphill toward him, indefinite and immense like the ghost of some vast, dark tidal inundation, its ragged front stretching for many hundred yards. . . . He almost expected to feel it cold, like water; and, indeed, when it rushed over him it was as though twilight had fallen suddenly: the colour was wrung out of the close-cropped turf, the west wind grew appreciably keener, and the brambles at his back lashed themselves and moaned more loudly. And then in a flash it had gone and was surging far away down the slope behind him, dwindling like breath upon a mirror as it fled; and all about him the world was gold and blue and green again, and very hot.

Wearied though Tregonnoc was, he did not feel he needed sleep just then: it was far better to lie and watch this kaleidoscopic tapestry of colour through half-closed eyes. The steady rhythm of movement soothed his nerves like a caress. For the time he ceased to care about himself: it no longer seemed to matter that he was a hunted fugitive who had eaten his last poor meal two days before, whose chin was covered with a five days' bristle of hair, whose face and hands and clothes might have been those of any tramp—whose whole appearance was in effect an insult to that glorious afternoon. His dreadful flight and its still more dreadful cause appeared as remote events scarcely connected with his present state—scarcely connected even with himself. Although his facile temperament had been at all times capable of gathering honey where others would have found no more than thorns, he now felt himself to be more truly happy in his rags and hopelessness than he had been for many years. Nor was

this happiness allied to that stupor of fatigue and terror which had held him for the past five days. He was drowsy, indeed, but his mind was clear; and he was dimly conscious that the ridge on which he lay was like the Rubicon, standing for a definite cleavage between the old life and the new. He felt that his past, that growing ulcer, had been suddenly cut loose from his life; so that he could look back upon it with a manner of detachment, as though it were the past of someone else, and no more to him than a curious and interesting phenomenon.

And so it fell out that while he followed almost unconsciously the endless passage of the shadows across the moor, a string of very different pictures was passing, like the film of a cinematograph, through his brain. With his mind's eye he saw his ignoble career, his broken-hearted family, his alienated friends, and the whole ugly vista of his liabilities to honour. There was something hackneyed about this train of memories; it was like turning over the pages of a familiar book. For after every lapse it had come before him to be surveyed and deprecated and to awaken transient resolutions of reform. This time, however, there was a difference in his attitude: he surveyed these pictures impersonally and made no resolutions; for they did not seem to belong to him at all.

But while, like a practised reader, he skimmed rapidly over these well-known passages, he found himself reviewing more thoroughly, though no less coldly, the steps which led up to his final catastrophe. That tragedy itself he could not linger over, even now. He felt instinctively that his new armour of detachment was not proof against so stern and recent a reality; and stepping over it, with his mind's eye averted (as it were), he passed on to the events of the subsequent five days, which, in the retrospect, seemed like a lustrum of years. By virtue of his new apathy and of this automatic mental boycott of their tragic cause, he was able to survey them with astonishing tranquillity of spirit. Viewed from this detached standpoint they were strangely interesting, for he was no longer turning over dog's-eared pages, long since annotated and digested: this was a new volume, with uncut leaves; and the shadow behind, though he would not even think of it, lent to their study a fearful, elusive fascination.

Hour by hour, day by day, he went over those events once more, scrupulously, dispassionately, as he would have gone over the narrative of some stranger's tribulations. He began with that first dreadful night when he had fled westward upon a bicycle, with no more clothes than those he wore, a few shillings in his pocket, and mere black terror gnawing at his soul. By daybreak he knew his crime must be discovered, so that within a few hours the telegraph would disseminate the news and his own description throughout the country; and as he pedalled madly under the stars he felt the breath of the law hot upon his neck. It was in the small hours of the morning that he had started; and the traffic of the streets was confined to a few belated cabs, a homeless wanderer or two, and country carts, laden high with odorous flowers and vegetables, wending their deliberate way to Covent Garden. But now and then there fell like thunder on his ears a distant steady footfall, and he would see the light of a lantern playing over the house-fronts: and at these portents he would fall into such a paroxysm of terror that his heart almost ceased to beat and his limbs to perform their office. But as yet no one knew him for a criminal; and he was pursued only by his fears.

He remembered how presently the houses had begun to thin away and be replaced by trees and hedgerows; and how the beauties of the night burst suddenly upon him when he reached the open country. Rain had fallen during that evening, and the air was ineffably fresh: the road ran beneath his wheels like a track; and for a moment a strange exultation had filled his soul. So, he had felt, he could ride for ever under the stars. And then suddenly there had come to him the recollection of why he rode, and of what lay behind him and what before; and of the imminence of day. "Oh, God!" he had cried. "If only it were always night . . . !"

(But now, as he lay there on those western moors, it all seemed strangely colourless and far away. A lark was singing above him, and the faint intermittent music of sheep-bells came to him along the gusts. . . .)

He remembered how a little later, with a sudden revulsion

of feeling, he had found the darkness of that night intolerable. For a moment he forgot man's indiscriminating justice: the black hours, always suggestive, apt conjurors of the eerie and bizarre, became peopled with impalpable horrors, until he prayed for day as but a short while before he had prayed for everlasting night. The inhuman glitter of the stars, the more awful human silence that had fallen on the black inane, filled him with a crushing sense of his own isolation. About him on the countryside families lay snug within their houses, animals within their byres and stables, placidly asleep; a minute, nocturnal world was busy about its affairs among the grasses of the fields; and he, like a leper, swept along the highway hagridden and alone. He had been wrung for the hundredth time by an ecstasy of regret: the eternal, futile "Why did I do it?" He had thought with passionate fondness of the previous morning, when he had walked the streets of London unslept, unshaven, destitute, and hungry; a broken thing, conscious within himself of a hundred falls from rectitude, but still free and under no public implication. So short a period of time, he had reflected, had passed since then; yet how irrevocably had he not damned himself therein! In twenty hours a moth might enter into the world, compass a lively and satiate career, and expire of mere senility; as for his own end, which he then saw indicated with shocking clarity of detail, he might well have been born the day before for all the influence upon it his previous thirty years exerted: the events of those twenty hours stood like a cliff between the old life and the new; and the new promised to be as brief as that of any butterfly. . . .

(It was strange how completely and how coldly he could now recall even these workings of his mind.)

And always he had pedalled along mechanically, but with a furious insistence, too wrought upon by his emotions to feel fatigue. This early portion of the road, through the home counties, was strange to him, and he had no clue to the passage of the miles. He passed through dark and silent villages and one considerable town, where the illuminated dial of a clock had informed him that the hour was half-past three. For the most part he took small

notice of such things about him as were visible, but stared blindly in front of him to where the funnel of the night seemed to run together into a point of profound intensity. His lamp had cast a weak and quivering fan-shaped radiance upon the road, and caught more brightly a section of his front wheel, which revolved everlastingly in a little golden haze of dust. And presently he had begun to feel very tired. His legs ached abominably, and he suffered a moment's excruciating pain in his back. But whenever he thought of his fatigue he thought also of its cause; and with terror jogging at his elbow he had spurted on once more. . . .

(And now he lay upon his own moors in the hot sun, watching the racing shadows of the clouds; and all these things had happened to someone else, long ago. Five years ago, was it? Or five months? Or was it indeed only five days? After all, what did it matter. . . .?)

He remembered in how startling a fashion the news of the dawn had come to him as he fled that night five days ago. As he pedalled heavily and automatically along, his brain inert, his body aching and glowing, the very cause of this hegira gone for the time from his memory, he had felt happier in his semi-stupor of fatigue than he had done for many hours. He still knew that he must ride, but the dreadful reason had escaped him. And then, from over a hedge, there came the sudden shrill outcry of a cock saluting the day. "Cocorico!" it crowed. "Cocorico. . . .!" And a third time, "Cocorico. . . .!"

The bird's innocent welcome to the sun fell like a cold douche upon Tregonnoc. He started in his saddle and awoke; for an instant his wits were all astray; and then a spate of terrifying recollections rushed tumultuously back into his mind. His heart bounded sickeningly within him. He looked fearfully behind him, and summoned his energies for another effort; and although he felt as though he were bruised from head to foot, the machine leaped forward under the impulse of his terror. Behind him the road lay straight and desert in the twilight, but he knew that the eastern glow was illuminating the scene and detail of his crime, withdrawing it from the blessed shadows and

thrusting it forward, in strong relief, to catch the first inquiring eye; and even at that moment all might be known and his name and appearance already advertised abroad. The very telegraph wires that ran above his head might be in the article of expediting the fatal message; and with that thought the fugitive had suddenly appreciated the fatuity of travelling by so important a highway. The great West road was no place for one who wished to avoid his fellow-men. He had accordingly turned up the first cross-road he came to, and travelled thenceforward by unfrequented and circuitous lanes.

So had passed the first night; and the story of the ensuing days and nights seemed like a long blur of pain, broken here and there by sharper agonies. Such a one marked the second morning; when, at a solitary shop where it was possible to purchase anything from hams to farthing pills, the fugitive had acquired (together with his last meagre supply of food) a daily newspaper. When he had opened this, round a bend of the deserted road, his hands trembled violently; the sheets, caught by a gust, flapped and struggled like sentient and angry beings; and it was some time before he could control either himself or them sufficiently to read. But when he did so, he had no difficulty in finding what he sought. Arresting headlines leaped from the page and burned themselves into his brain; and below two columns were devoted to the details of his crime. The sight of it all put down so brutally in print brought the unhappy man near to fainting. . . .

Yet, on the whole, these later days of flight left but few individual impressions on Tregonnoc's mind. Always, as he recalled that time, he seemed to have been riding, riding, riding. The road, like some interminable tape, unreeled itself beneath him; and at times he had a mad notion that he rode upon a moving pathway, so that not only did he make no progress, but he must ever pedal desperately lest he should be swept back to where he started. And then the chance encounters of the road kept him continually upon the rack. He was acutely conscious of his unshaven face, his soiled collar, his generally dishevelled mien; he read suspicion in the incurious glances of the loungers at the inn-doors; and a call across the fields went through him like a knife. Yet in all this time he met

but few people; now and then a handful of farm labourers, groups of gossips in the hamlets he had fled so fearfully, and the usual meagre rolling-stock of such aimless byways.

And when he could ride no more, he would push his machine into a patch of wood and sleep. Not even his terrors could suspend sleep.

It was early on the fourth morning that his bicycle had broken down. It was impossible for him to effect the necessary repairs; and having concealed it as best he might among the undergrowth of a plantation, he continued his flight on foot, slinking along footpaths and under hedgerows, avoiding all roads except when he was forced to cross them. He was now become quite broken in spirit: he was numb with weariness and ravenous with hunger; but almost automatically he staggered on. A few berries were all he ate during the fourth day. But that night, in a barn, he slept as heavily as a drunken man. And by the fifth afternoon, as we have seen, he had come into his own country. . . .

Meanwhile, over the moors, the sun was sinking. The sky was no longer of that intense midsummer blue, but was become the colour of green emeralds. The hosts of the clouds still poured out of the West, but these later regiments were not clothed like their predecessors in white and gold, but wore more sober uniforms of mauve and brown. Also in some of the deeper hollows certain companies of shadows had come to a halt and piled their arms and taken up their quarters for the night. But along the rising ground the others were still marching on.

In fact, an hour or more had passed while Tregonnoc was bringing his miserable chronicle up to date, for he had dwelt on particular incidents with a morbid interest, turning them over and viewing them from all sides, like some connoisseur. He now felt rested and less drowsy; but the same sense of detachment and indifference remained with him. Having concluded his task, he could not but remark that he felt as cold toward it at the end as at the beginning. What had come to him, who had always prided himself upon his sensibility, that he could review in such cold blood that intimate and melancholy career? He felt no regrets, as he had been wont to do: his customary peni-

tent resolutions remained untabulated—unthought of, even. It was not that the theme was too familiar, for the events of the past five days had proved to be incapable of arousing any more emotion than the hackneyed story of the previous thirty years' decline. Nor was it that he had become suddenly hardened. He was (and he knew it) too weak a man to be hardened by anything. It was cowardice, and not any natural inclination, that had been again and again the agent of his fall; and he was no less pliable now than he had been before. He must seek elsewhere for the solution of his riddle. Besides, he was conscious that it was not so much his outlook that was changed as that *things* were different. Something had happened since he staggered over the brow of that hill, where the brambles grew, an hour or so ago (or had it indeed happened earlier. . . .?) He had only become indifferent to his disreputable past and his hopeless future because both had somehow ceased to belong to him. He was free of them. They seemed to represent the story of some other person in whom he felt no more than an intellectual interest: some person, moreover, unknown to him: some person who to him was as good as dead. . . .

And in that moment light broke upon the unhappy man. A wave of horror turned him faint. His whole body was aglow with a raging heat and as quickly fallen again to the temperature of ice. The phrase which his thoughts had formed was written before him in letters of fire: "As good as dead. . . .!" Of course, *he* was the person who was as good as dead; and he knew it now. That end which he had fled to escape had all the time been set aside for him by fate. The bramble-crowned ridge was not his Rubicon: that had been crossed five days before; and from the moment of his passage his end was preordained—he was "as good as dead." Others might escape the consequences of sin or folly; he knew quite certainly now that there was no escape for him. What was more, he realised that he had known it unconsciously for the past hour. While his intellect remained deaf and blind, stunned, perhaps, by his fatigue, some subtle sympathy in the air of his own country had opened the eyes of his soul. There was little wonder that his past had for the first time failed to arouse him to the most transient

astonishment or shame. While he was blind, his soul already knew that no remorse, howsoever sincere, no resolutions, howsoever stoutly kept, would any longer avail to pull him back. There was little wonder, again, that he had felt such small care for the future. His soul had known that he had not a future any more. . . . And the message which his soul had tried to utter his mind now understood. Sentence had been passed; in this world there was no hope for him. Another few hours of freedom, another day, perhaps, and then, by hunger, by his own hand, or by the rope, the story of one more ill-spent life would be irrevocably closed.

Now presently, when Tregonnoc had lain still for some time in the clutch of this revelation, his brain rioting madly like some piece of active mechanism of which he had lost control, he rose almost involuntarily to his feet and began to walk slowly and shakily down into the valley before him. He was moved by some incomprehensible but quite definite impulse. It seemed that there remained something yet for him to do. And at once his agony of mind abated and he began to grow calmer in body and spirit; and under the influence of this reaction everything—himself, his past, his future, the whole world about him—became thoroughly unreal once more. But whereas before he had seemed to stand alone among the unreality of things, he was alone no longer. He walked forward like a man in a dream; but he felt like a child who is led by the hand.

This sensation of guidance and companionship grew upon him very rapidly. *Someone* was walking by his side, keeping step by step with him, and leading him in a certain direction. He found himself casting sudden, furtive glances over his shoulder, and he had the impression that his companion had always just whisked away out of eye-shot. Once he thought to catch a vague shape like a shadow or a blur of smoke. . . . And a little later, so strong was this feeling of haunting, he stopped dead and spun round very quickly, sweeping all sides with his eyes: and on all sides the moors rolled away as bare and empty as the palm of his hand. It was only when he looked straight before him, making no direct attempt to see this phantom, that the latter became half visible out of the

corner of his eye; and then at one time it seemed to Tregonnoc that it was his mother who walked with him, and at another it was his father, while again the face he almost saw would be the face of some radiant and lovable stranger. For a moment he wondered if he were going mad, and the thought frightened him horribly; but his fears soon left him again when he realised how welcome this invisible presence had already become. The sense of companionship was very real and pleasant; and he who had never known a thorough friend had some conception at this, the extremity of his life, of the beauty of friendship. His spirit was warmed and comforted as by a fire. His hunger seemed to have been satisfied, his weariness dispelled, the very veins of that hard-used shell, his body, filled with some new, invigorating fluid. His slouching step was animated into briskness by his eagerness to complete this journey; for he knew well enough by now whither he was being led. He was making for the town where he was born, nine, or perhaps ten, miles away across the moors. He did not know—he did not want to know—the details of what lay before him there: he only desired to hurry on, to get things finished, to be at rest; but he felt assured that for him the curtain was to be rung down on that same stage from which it had first been raised upon his life. . . . And so he trudged on vigorously, looking now neither to the right nor to the left, caring little about anything, but happy with his strange companion; and as he journeyed the sun sank lower and lower in the West, the shadows lengthened and filled up hollow after hollow, the hurrying clouds grew ever darker of hue. The wind blew as gustily as ever, and carried with it the chime of sheep-bells and the smell of the sea. And into the soul of the tragic weakling there filtered, drop by drop, the essence of peace. . . .

It was after dark when Tregonnoc and his strange companion passed into the outer suburbs of the town. The wind was rising, so that the street-lamps flickered madly; while overhead a wrack of shapeless cloud was driving athwart the stars. The smell of brine was strong in the air, and mingled with it there swept by now and again those other odours which belong to towns given over to ships and

the sea: odours of tar and paint and hemp and sail-cloth and other things. These familiar scents caught Tregonnoc by the throat and filled him with delight and infinite sadness, although the streets through which they passed were all new since his time. But always his companion hurried him on.

And now the stranger was no longer wholly invisible. He (if it were indeed the semblance of a man) swept along by Tregonnoc's side, a tall, dark, formidable figure whose features and dress were blurred and indistinguishable in those ill-lit streets. And presently he spoke:

"You have one more chance," he said, "and it is near at hand."

And Tregonnoc heard himself asking:

"Who are you?"

"You may call me the Managing Director," the stranger replied. "You will know more about me soon. But hurry! hurry! This is a great chance offered you! Hurry, or it will be too late! See how the others are running. . . .!"

And Tregonnoc was aware of great crowds of people rushing before him, crying out and pointing. And suddenly, in front of them all, where a glow like the reflection of the city's lamps hung in the sky, there gushed up a great tongue of red flame and a scattering of sparks and a pillar of crimson smoke. At that the voices grew louder and the hurrying people ran faster; and Tregonnoc and the stranger ran with them.

They turned into a long wide street lined with big houses—a street which Tregonnoc remembered well. Now it was bathed in a dreadful crimson light and packed with a vast concourse of people, who shouted and gesticulated and whose faces were like little crimson dots. From many of the windows other little crimson faces looked out. And about midway down a tall house was burning furiously all up one side, and the gush of flame had been caused by the half of its roof falling in. The roar of the fire was like the roar of breakers on a shingle beach; and an immense canopy of crimson smoke blotted out the sky.

Taking Tregonnoc by the hand, the stranger ran with him into the heart of the crowd; and the people seemed to part before them like blades of grass, so that in an

instant the former found himself in the front rank, and only a few yards away from the burning house. Policemen were keeping the crowd back and attempting to clear a way for the fire-engine, which was expected every moment.

"My God!" someone cried, close to Tregonnoc; "it burns like tinder! Where's that damned engine. . . .?"

In fact, the whole of one side and the top storey of the house were now ablaze; and it seemed that the stairs had caught, for at that minute two men came staggering out of the front door. They held their hands before their eyes and their mouths were muffled with cloths, and they had evidently attempted to rescue someone within. Simultaneously, in fact, three little faces appeared at an upper window, the faces of children, who stretched out their hands and shrieked so that their voices rang out above the pandemonium which filled the street.

"See!" the stranger cried to Tregonnoc. "There is your great chance! Give your used-up, worthless life for the lives of those children! You can save them, I promise you. It is surely a better way to die than another you know of. . . . That other is no less certain, however, if you prefer it. You are expected here, and within an hour you will be identified and arrested! Come! You have got to make an end somehow—to-day or in a few weeks. Is not this the better way?"

The roar of the flames, the shouts of the people, the pitiless crimson light, the sense of horror, the *speed* of everything, had almost unsettled the mind of Tregonnoc. He was torn by a passion of doubt and fear. Nothing had prepared him for this inferno of fire and noise. . . . Yet he had no time to think: hardly time to understand what the stranger had said to him. One phrase, however, rang in his ears like the notes of a bell. "Within an hour you will be identified. . . ." Truly this was a better death than that other which awaited him. Yet that other was far away, and this was near and very terrible. . . .

But while he hesitated, someone (was it the stranger or was it actually himself?) had dipped a sodden towel into a bucket of water that stood near by and wrapped it about his mouth.

"Go straight in at the door," the stranger cried in his

ear. "Do not be afraid! You will be allowed to do this before the end. Straight up the stairs and throw the children out. They will be caught. . . . But go! go!" he cried in a loud voice.

And Tregonnoc, hardly knowing what he did, ran headlong across the open space toward the front door, out of which drifted veils of vapour. A shout went up behind him; but it sounded to him like the whisper you may hear in a shell.

Within the door it was so dark and thick that he had to grope his way to the stair-head. He felt the banisters and began to climb. And at that moment a thick cloud of smoke and sparks beat down upon him from above, filling his eyes and almost choking him through the wet cloth. And from the midst of the smoke a long bright flame, like a sword, stabbed at him.

The old cowardice seized him and melted his heart to water. He turned and ran. Blinded and scorched, but virtually unhurt, he staggered out again into the open and across to where the stranger stood watching. As he did so, another roar went up from the crowd, and another rescuer darted past into the smoking doorway.

Shaking like a man in a fever, Tregonnoc pulled the cloth from his face and gasped for breath. Slowly he understood what he had done. His old fatal cowardice had lost him this last great gift—this undeserved chance of a good death. The shadow of that other death seemed very near. "Within an hour. . . ." And now nothing he could do would forestall it, for fear had mastered him once more; he was his old self. He dare not try the flames again. . . . He looked up, cringing like a dog, and met the stranger's eyes.

But where he had expected to meet anger or contempt, he found only an infinite pity. For the first time he could see the stranger's face clearly; and whether or no it was the glare from the burning house he could not tell, but the features seemed to shine with a light of their own.

In the depths of his shame and terror, Tregonnoc did not hear a rattle of wheels and hoofs which drew rapidly nearer, nor the voices which cried, "The engine! Thank God! the engine!" He did not see the people scatter before the onset of the grey horses. He was watching through

his tears the pitying glance of the stranger become a beautiful smile, a smile that made him think of roses and the blue sea and the angels and fairies of his childhood.

"Poor soul!" he seemed to hear the stranger say; "You shall be saved . . ." And then in a louder voice, which there was no mistaking, "But run! Run quickly! They are after you. . . . That way!"

Another paroxysm of unreasoning terror swept over Tregonnoc. He turned where the stranger's hand seemed to urge him, and ran as for his life. A sudden thunder stupefied him; he heard a volume of faint cries. And then the great grey horses knocked him down and the red engine rolled over his wearied body.

When they picked him up afterwards they found he had been killed at once, by the blow of a hoof.

"Well, he was a plucky fellow," said one. "He did his best. *I* wouldn't go into that house. But there was another chap standing talking to him. You'd better look for him; he may know something about him."

"A woman you mean," another helper cried; "he was talking to a woman."

And they wrangled about it. But when they looked around, the stranger was no longer there.

Copyright and the Case of Coleridge Taylor

By Dr. S. Squire Sprigge

No one denies that within certain limitations the man who does the work should receive the results of his work. But when, in almost any field that we may choose, we begin to discuss what those limitations should be, we are faced with difficulties which become harder to meet in proportion with the multiplicity or delicacy of the circumstances under which the work was done. If the State, by the facilities which it provides, enables a man to do the work, he owes some of any reward which may accrue to him back to the State. If an employer defrays all, or a proportion, of the expenses of production he must have his due return. If the services of an agent are required the agent must be remunerated. As a rule, the State, the employer, and the agent are all able to place themselves in the position of being certain of obtaining their shares, though it has before now happened that ingenious authorship has been able to reap a harvest which it had not actually sown. But it will be seen at once that any question of the property of a man in the invention of his brain may be complicated, and quite fairly so, by questions of taxation; the relations of capital to labour and of employer to employed must be remembered; the fact that the agent may have to do original work or to incur outlay in behalf of his principal will have to be recognised. Mr. Binney Dibblee's original and stimulating book, "The Laws of Supply and Demand," brings good evidence to show that in some cases as much actual talent goes to the marketing as to the creation. I only mention these obvious things in the briefest manner because the accusation is more than occasionally brought that they are always forgotten by those who write about the division of profits following upon literary and artistic production. In what follows I have tried to bear them in mind throughout.

COPYRIGHT AND COLERIDGE TAYLOR

It has been, from the origin of the Society of Authors, a standing piece of advice from the Society to authors, whether of books, plays, or music, that they should not part with their copyrights, if they can keep them, that is, unless the advantages of outright sale are preponderant. The advice is perfectly general, and it has always been allowed by the Society that in some instances it can be waived safely and fairly. But recently the public appeal on behalf of Mr. Coleridge Taylor's dependants furnished the Society of Authors with so obvious a text upon which to hang its often-reiterated counsel, its almost boring sermon, that there can be no wonder that advantage was taken of the situation and that publicity was given by the Society to a very suggestive combination of things: namely, the death of Mr. Coleridge Taylor in comparative poverty; the admitted popularity of certain of his musical work; and the outright sale of much of his property as a musical composer.

I was deputed by the Committee of the Society of Authors, as the chairman for the year, to address the Editor of *The Times*, in November last, and to inquire through him why a composer who wrote so widely successful a composition as *Hiawatha*, a work which is frequently performed all over England and America, should have left so little provision for his family that public charity had to be asked for his widow and children. Before any letter was written it was ascertained from Messrs. Novello and Co. that the copyright of all Coleridge Taylor's works published by the firm had been assigned to the firm, while we were informed that Coleridge Taylor had been refused a royalty upon *Hiawatha*, Coleridge Taylor's principal work. The latter statement was traversed by Messrs. Novello and Co., who took the correspondence out of the region of general discussion into that of personalities; but the point which they tried to make is of subordinate interest, save to themselves, as it is fairly clear that whether Coleridge Taylor sought to obtain a royalty or no, nothing of that nature was given to him of any great value, or he would have left more than £800 behind him at his death. For the reputation of *Hiawatha* is a solid affair, not to be compared to the vogue of a detective story or of a treatise on the art of making paper flowers. I must add here that Coleridge Taylor is

allowed on all hands to have been a hard-working, simple-living man. This was no case of the artistic roysterer, earning huge sums easily and spending them still more easily; it is necessary to insist upon this point, remembering the rooted belief of the public in the improvidence of the artist. To those who picture a successful composer as necessarily living in a sumptuous manner, scattering easily earned cheques upon ministering to æsthetic inclinations, it may have seemed quite natural that Coleridge Taylor should have died so poor. But to those who knew him, and, incidentally, the world, the knowledge of his poverty came as a shocking revelation. It appears that Coleridge Taylor received £250 in all for *Hiawatha*—£50 for each of the three parts, and £100 as a bonus—a sort of reward for being a good boy, I suppose. These are the figures which were brought to the Society of Authors as undeniable, and on them we were assured by those who had in hand a public appeal for Coleridge Taylor's dependants that such an appeal was justified. What Messrs. Novello and Co. have received, or are receiving, for *Hiawatha* I make no attempt to guess, and Messrs. Novello and Co. have stated publicly that they do not intend to disclose the secrets of their business to anyone, an attitude which they are within their obvious rights to adopt, though the public in this particular instance has been asked to subscribe money without having the situation made clear to them. How many thousands *Hiawatha* has earned we may never know; how many hundreds it may be earning we may never know; and if, perhaps at some future date and in some foreign country, the estate of the late Coleridge Taylor should re-enter into any receipts from some form of royalty, probably we shall never know the result. But we cannot help knowing enough to see that when Coleridge Taylor transferred the copyright of *Hiawatha* to Messrs. Novello and Co. he made a lamentable bargain, and this is the point upon which I wish to say a little more. I have been told by one who knows well the firm of Messrs. Novello and Co. that to re-open the subject may do but poor service to the dependants of Coleridge Taylor, but I think more highly of the eminent musical publishers than their friend does, for I am perfectly certain that if they are intending to pension Mrs. Coleridge Taylor, or otherwise to benefit the dependants of the dead

composer, they will not change from a resolution dictated by kindness or justice, because it is absolutely necessary to bring before the public the unsatisfactory nature of business arrangements which have later to be adjusted by payments made outside the legal contract entered upon. Rather I would hazard the guess that the pension is already running, or that the endowment of the dependants has been already arranged.

The inquiry made through the Editor of *The Times* as to the reason of Coleridge Taylor's poverty seems to me to have one answer, and indeed I cannot think of any other that should supplement it. The whole story is an admirable example of the troubles that may, and all too often do, follow upon the outright sale of literary or artistic property. It cannot be too clearly said that, because of the uncertainty of the value of this property, its outright sale must be attended with risk either to the creator of the work or to its purchaser. It is freely admitted that outright sale has its advantages on the surface—it gives the publisher a free hand and it gives the author a sum down. But these advantages are outweighed by the objections to what must be either a gambling transaction, or a transaction where the risk on one side is only apparent, and where the profits are fairly certain to accrue to the other side. One or other party to these bargains by outright sale too often suffers. If it is the experience at the Society of Authors that it is the author of the work who is generally disappointed at the result of the disposal of copyright, there have been undoubtedly many cases, some of which are as notorious as the case of *Endymion*, where publishers purchasing books or compositions outright have suffered in the issue. But whatever be the outcome of any isolated transaction, a system is bad in business which leaves it so greatly to chance whether buyer or seller makes a satisfactory arrangement.

Many systems are bad in business which are very difficult to avoid, but they can be avoided for the most part, if it is to the interest of both parties to choose some alternative way of protecting their joint and several interests. Further, if any system which is bad, demonstrably bad, is maintained by one party and disliked by the other, it is but human to conclude that it is a system which, on the whole, works to the advantage of the former and to the disadvantage of the

latter. The system by which the author at the outset of any bargain with the publisher is asked to surrender his copyright can be avoided in most circumstances—if any proof of this fact is required, we can point to the agreements that are nowadays made between sagacious authors and responsible publishers. A few years ago the first formal clause in agreements between authors and publishers very generally assigned the copyright to the publisher indefinitely—sometimes unconditionally, and sometimes as long as some royalty was paid. Now, it is quite usual to find the author's right to re-enter into his property recognised, whether by an ascending scale of royalty or by some other provision. A few years ago any sum paid down to an author implied the handing over of copyright by him; now such sums are frequently paid in advance of royalties. But the difficult cases are still numerous, and the typical one is, of course, the case of the beginner. To him publicity means so much. He must make a start by getting publicity; if the publisher demands the copyright, what is the young author to do who is offered a small sum down?

The advice of the Society of Authors is that he should, at any rate for a season, resist the offer and try to find a publisher who will give him a royalty, however small. The publisher proposes to put money and work into selling the book; the author has put work, and such brains as he may have, into writing it. Let the royalty, in the case of the beginner's book, be quite small; let it be withheld in some cases until some number of sales, arranged in accordance with the genuine cost of production, has been made; but if possible let the author keep his copyright. In this way the publisher will be at no greater loss if the book fails altogether than he would have been if he had paid outright for something that would not sell, while in the case of a real success the author would receive some reward for his toil commensurate with the returns. The scale of royalties is infinitely flexible, so that figures can be arrived at whereby the publisher can set off against the losses which he must sometimes incur the gains which his business training will enable him rightly and fairly to make sure of; may such gains be good, for they are well deserved. The crowning advantage of such an arrangement is that the author knows his position, and not only is the deep disappointment of

having made a bad bargain spared him, but he can enter upon a future agreement with some knowledge of what, at any point in his career, he is worth in the market. Of course, if his pecuniary position is such that he must accept for all the rights in his creation the first sum that is offered to him, whatever it be, all this very obvious reasoning is wasted on his plight, but I doubt whether this situation is as common a one as we are led to believe. At any rate, the author who sells his whole work outright should understand that it is only his immediate poverty that is relieved for certain; his future position is not one whit altered by having made such a bargain, unless the sum which he obtains is a very large one. The great probability is that, after having sold the copyright of his first book outright, he will have the same difficulty with his next book in obtaining other terms, for he will have no knowledge of what money has been earned by his work. His publishers would be perfectly within their rights to take up the position assumed by Messrs. Novello and Co. and say to the inquiring author that, as business men, they did not feel called upon to disclose the secrets of their business to him or anyone else. How in such an event can the author justify a demand for larger emoluments next time, either from his original publisher or from any new publisher whom he may approach without credentials? In what way, unless he has made an important success, can he be said to have secured practical advance? While if he has made the important success he must be content to know that the publisher has received the proceeds, or be pleased to accept with mixed sensations a gift of money which he feels he should have been allowed to earn. On the whole, and wherever it is possible, the author should not sell his copyright outright, but should be content to await the time when he can obtain some form of contract which, in the case of a success, would bring him a due share of the profits, and which in any event would provide him with information that should enable him to progress in his calling. It is not a fact that the royalty system need be confined entirely to successful authors and composers; but of course the others have to remember that they cannot expect royalties on the scale of their more fortunate brethren, or large sums of money down in advance of those royalties. Where a publisher will be at the expense of putting a work

on the market at his own risk for an author who has no previous successes to quote, the almost invariably wise course—there can be no quite general rule—is for the author to prefer to a sum of money down in exchange for his copyright, any royalty which has to be paid upon an edition whose limits are defined in some way.

The Coleridge Taylor case provides an apt illustration of the truth of these things, though it must be remembered that when the first part of *Hiawatha* appeared the author was not a young beginner, and that when the second and third parts appeared he had won a great and far-reaching victory. Coleridge Taylor appears to have disposed of all his copyrights; at any rate, where Messrs. Novello and Co. published his works he assigned the copyrights to them. They were perfectly right to accept the copyrights, if they could get them, but it is certain that Coleridge Taylor was as perfectly wrong, from a business point of view, to make over his property in this way. By so doing he deprived himself of a share in the results of his work commensurate with his success, whether he disposed of his copyright for a sum down, or in return for a fixed royalty; for a royalty accompanying perpetual assignment of copyright may bear no relation to proper payment. And an especially sad part about the arrangement between Coleridge Taylor and his publishers seems to have been that Messrs. Novello and Co. approve of the royalty system in suitable cases, but never saw how suitable that system would have been as applied to the receipts of *Hiawatha*. For undoubtedly the public has been much stirred by learning that it could be possible for a popular composer to die after many years of labour, and at a high pitch of fame, and leave, through no fault of his own, such scanty support for his dependants that it was necessary for those in charge of his affairs to organise a public appeal. But it is of excellent omen for the future that Messrs. Novello and Co. should have stated publicly, in the course of the correspondence in *The Times*, their general habit of publishing on whatever footing the composer prefers.

To avoid such tragedies as the tragedy which has been revealed in the case of Coleridge Taylor, it only remains for the composer, wherever it is possible and even when the immediate indications are in the oppo-

site sense, to express his preference for payment by royalty without assignment of copyright. To the composer of music this advice applies now with particular force, for under the new Copyright Act (1911) the following things occur:—First, the right to print and publish is, of course, conveyed by the assignment of copyright. But, secondly, the right to secure any fees that may be obtainable for performances depends on the same assignment; thirdly, the discretion of licensing mechanical reproductions, and fourthly, the right to secure royalties where mechanical reproduction is granted, are both surrendered if copyright is surrendered. Now, in the future, such have been the recent developments in the mechanical reproduction of music, it is quite likely that rights over this form of publicity will become the largest source of revenue to those who own the copyrights. In these circumstances, it is absurd for any composer to assign his copyrights if he has any chance of reserving them; while it is a sadly significant fact that, in the agreements usually submitted by the publishers of music to composers, such assignment is demanded.

[*Editor's Note.*—In France some sort of legislation with regard to artistic copyright is being attempted. There is a Bill before the House whereby 2 per cent. be paid to the artist on the difference between the price paid at the original sale and that of any subsequent sale or sales over and above that of the original purchase. For instance, the old and crippled Dégas, who recently witnessed the sale of one of his pictures produce eight times what he had received for it, would have obtained, according to the projected law, 2 per cent. on the difference—which is not much, but still a beginning.]

Cold Comfort

By Norman Douglas

If somebody were to give me a Teddy-bear, I think I might still extract a few drops of consolation from it. How delightful to be able to take it to bed, unashamed: to project ourselves into it, pouring into its ears our little joys and troubles, as children do; and then fall asleep, hugging it ecstatically in our arms. Warm comfort, this. Only think: it understands everything, and *never answers back*. How many of our earthly bed-fellows possess these advantages? There is something almost divine in its aloofness from selfish motives and genial sympathy with our sorrows; yes, something that reminds one of divinity which, by the way, also understands everything, and never answers back.

But Teddy-bears were not invented in my time, and nobody nowadays thinks of giving me one. I am past the age, they tell me. I must console myself with pragmatism, mysticism, and other subjective, labyrinthine creeds.

Cold comfort, I call them.

And yet they are very much to the fore just now. Our ancestors—as we imagine them, at all events—took violent outdoor exercise and so disposed of the toxins of their imagination by motor activities. Modern digestions are rather torpid and this is what destroys frank, energetic individualism and inclines us to submit to some sacerdotal authority which shall save us the trouble of thinking for ourselves. It is the herd-spirit. We diminish imaginary griefs by leaning on confederates who think, or rather feel, as we do.

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Society seeks regeneration, says a prominent weekly, reviewing these recent philosophic speculations. No doubt; no doubt. The statement is convincingly true, and so very novel that the Sussex cave-man, I suspect, was heard to

mutter something to that effect. He, too, felt the "great unrest" in his dyspeptic moments.

And what is it—this want, this great unrest? I cannot tell, having never felt it. I have no wants that cannot be gratified by a little pertinacity. Perhaps that is because I am not conscious of possessing an immortal soul which "vexes itself" and craves for strange meats. When anything goes wrong, I know that either I have done something I ought not to have done, or—more commonly—that my friends have left undone those things which they ought to have done (for me). My desires are of this planet; I have discovered that what you cannot find on earth is not worth seeking. It simplifies matters.

For the rest, this searching for goodness in things of the mind, this setting up of non-truths as ideals to be pursued on account of their utility as soporifics, is amateurish and oblique. How shall we adjust moral truths, which are practically stationary, to those of the intellect, which are progressive? It is the merest dabbling in discontent. Whoever endures real grief of heart soon learns to dispense with this kind of philosophy, or religion.

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It was one of the odd theories of Richard Burton that some Oriental races had too much laxity of the bowels to *resist*; the constipated northerners, he thought, possessed the required will-power to impose themselves on others. There is a good deal to be said for the notion. But constipation lies perilously near "vapours."

Now, man is the vaporous sex, the soulful sex—curious, by the way, that "vapours" and "soul" should be racially akin; the idealistic sex. He is always trying to grow metaphorical wings. Fortunately, woman is there, with her chastening terrestrial cynicism, to drag him back to earth again; she clips his wings tenderly, *con amore* and oh! so thoroughly, that no wonder if in the Middle Ages, when most of us males were mentally constipated, theologians were wont to discuss "Whether Women be Monsters." So much for everyday life. And in the domain of thought you will find female apostles for every kind of extravagance—anarchism, mormonism and what not—so

long as there is a semblance of reality, of backbone, to it. But I have yet to meet a convinced woman pragmatist. The stuff is too anæmic, too hazy. The worldly creature can make nothing of it. She leaves it alone, disdainfully; or, if sufficiently combative and enlightened, rends it to rags like Vernon Lee who, in her "Vital Lies," dissects these hermaphrodite yearnings, and then performs an airy war-dance upon their mangled remains.

* * * * * *

Mangling a dead ghost, I can hear some rationalist saying. Not a bit of it. If that ghost could be killed, Mr. Hobhouse and others, to say nothing of old Aristotle, would have finished him off long ago. He is not dead—not at all, at all; he is exactly like the Irishman who, apparently at the last gasp, whispers to his friend, anxious-like:

"Ain't I dead yet, Pat?"

"Sure, Mike," says the other, "you'd be dead long ago, if you only had the sense to stiffen out."

A stubborn ghost, this of Vernon Lee's; he refuses to *stiffen out*; he is liable to fits of spasmodic resurrection. That is because he is begotten of Plato, father of systematised crooked thinking, expounder of the acquiescent mood. That mood, the Will-to-Believe, is immortal; it derives from firm-fixed bodily imperfections which prevent us from adapting ourselves perfectly to our surroundings and leading the true Cosmic Life. And all the progeny of comforting ghosts sprung from that same desire to shun hard reality—all these metaphysical palliatives are likewise immortal. There is no killing them; you can but throw light, as somebody once said, into the dark places they inhabit, and show that nothing is there. Agile spectres! As fast as one drives them out of one cobwebby corner, they turn up in another. This is what makes the pursuit of them rather fatiguing.*

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Fatiguing; and monotonous. For it will not take you long to realise that, though their names are all different, their faces are all alike, throughout the ages.

* It is some ten years since I seriously bothered my head with this irrationalism, and I am not disposed to begin again. But I would like to see one error put right. An acute theory, developed independently by Prof. James, of Harvard, and Prof. Lange, of Copenhagen—the "James-

Here, for example, is the author of *Humanism* holding up the "Beatific Vision as the Ideal of Knowledge." And what says Father Plato? "The greatest of blessings come to us through frenzy, provided it is given with a divine giving." Or read the "Survival of Man" wherein, with abundant proofs from the spirit-world, we are assured, in this twentieth century, of the continuance of life after death. The idea is sufficiently familiar; it is based on a human wish, and this explains its persistence up to our day. Still, I would like to have a closer look at this particular author's programme. What on earth are we going to do with ourselves, all day long, in that blissful state? Our childish visions of apocalyptic harp-twangings on jasper floors were more straightforward than these vague pseudo-scientific dreamings. Cold comfort!

And all in search of happiness! How to compass happiness and yet remain inert—there's the question of the day. Its solution: the ostrich principle. As if the exhilarating feeling known by that name were anything but appropriate physical reaction—as if happiness without the aspiring Will-to-Deny were anything but an Oriental nightmare! The egocentric mood, the horror of a fact, makes for premature senility. To confront actualities and take joy in them—this is what gives resiliency and a gusto to life.

* * * * * *

Chiefest of all—the mystics, with their craving for non-reality. Will you have a sample ghost of the mystic, or misty, species? Just look at this PLEA FOR MYSTICISM, by one of the brotherhood.

Mysticism, he begins, *is best described by naming its opposite, intellectuality.*

He pleads, therefore, for the opposite of intellectuality. And why not, for a change?

Not that mysticism does not use intellect, but it uses this to elaborate, and convey to others, something which has been found by a higher faculty.

Let me see. The opposite of intellectuality uses intellect in order to elaborate something which has been found

Lange" theory of the Emotions—has brought considerable credit to these two investigators. Well, this theory was developed at an earlier period by Prof. Maudsley (*Physiology of Mind*, 1876, pp. 372, 384, 386–7, 472–4, *seq.*), and it seems to me that our English psychologist has not received due recognition in this respect.

by a faculty higher than the intellect. A faculty higher than intellect. . . . What is this faculty higher than intellect?

The pleader maintains a discreet silence.

What, at least, has this faculty found?

Ah!

There must first be a strong conviction that there is something better to be found than we at present have.

The faculty, therefore, has not yet quite finished finding it. When it has we shall know what it is. And after that, perhaps, we shall learn what the faculty itself may be. . . .

I have already said that I was born before the age of Teddy-bears. But if somebody were kind enough to supply me with one, I would undertake to derive more genuine solace out of it than out of these verbal symbols.

Yet there must be certain superior persons who are not deaf to this appeal for the opposite of intellectuality. Persons of spiritual refinement, I mean. The common herd, of course, wants something more "tangible" in the way of comfort. The common herd, I greatly fear, does not always get it, nowadays; for how often do we hear a complaint, in one form or another, to the following effect: "Your modern research takes away the poor folks' beliefs and consoling superstitions. What does it give them as a substitute?"

What, indeed?

* * * * * *

Which reminds me of what I heard from a young doctor who had spent a good deal of time in certain Alpine valleys where the disease known as goître is endemic. We see little of this hideous malformation in England, but there are districts in Carinthia, Savoy, Val d'Aosta and Salzburg where nearly all the population is afflicted with it; so much so that these people have come to regard it as a necessary appurtenance of their bodies—a kind of ornament, so to speak. They cannot bear the idea of having these strumous growths excised, and the doctor told me that he had the greatest difficulty in making them believe they were otherwise than beautiful. This is how they argued:

THE PATIENT. You tell me, doctor, that there are hundreds of other persons like yourself, without goîtres.

Likely enough. So much the worse for them! As for me, this valley is my world. All of us hereabouts, as you can see, possess these delectable excrescences. I remember my grandmother used to tell me——

THE PHYSICIAN. Nonsense, my good man. Your goître is a morbid growth that thrives at the expense of your whole body. It must be removed whenever possible. There is an institution at Berne——

THE PATIENT (*dismayed*). Good God! Remove it? Remove my goître? And pray, what do you propose to give me as a substitute?

THE PHYSICIAN (*after pondering awhile*). I will give you health! Is that not enough?

THE PATIENT. You surprise me, doctor. You are offering me a vague concept instead of a tangible something.

THE PHYSICIAN. Tangible something, indeed!

THE PATIENT. Yes, sir; a tangible something. Look at it. Isn't it a beauty? And if you only knew how comforting it was! Do try to get one, too, doctor; and then you will learn what it is to be really happy. My dear grandmother used to say——

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What is it but the old, old conflict between the Academy and the Stoa—between those who feel and those who reason? Sometimes the one gains the upper hand, sometimes the other. After the keen sceptic movement of the eighteenth century followed a wave of turbid romanticism; on the top of it came the Napoleonic scare which gave us a bad national jar and produced our worst period of insular obfuscation. Then arose a group of sane thinkers clustering, let us say, round Tyndall and Darwin, and opening up new vistas whose effulgence, however, was too bright for modern sages. They close their dazzled eyes and see—a welter of spectral images which, obedient to sound tradition, they endeavour to classify scientifically. Of such is pragmatism: a light from within, that shall serve as a guide in the place of *real apperception.*

Whether it be the repercussion from the Boer War which shook our nervous fibre more seriously than we imagine, or merely a reaction from the cosmopolitanism of Edward VII., we are certainly in an "early Victorian"

period—a period of *noumena*; Aristotle is obnoxious to us—witness the White Slave sensationalism, the "Back-to-the-Bible" movement, and other symptoms of revolt from reason. We read of the Doncaster bigots intent upon burning "Tom Jones." Bless their chastity! What a fine flavour of mediævalism they bring into these days of cinematographs and gramophones; and with what joy they would have burnt, not long ago, certain heretics I wot of!

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Pythagoras, that glorified marabout, was one of the first importers into Europe of the eastern microbe of introspection, and it still thrives on our relatively virgin soil. Now Orientals are inured to intellectual opiates; they can stand any amount of them, being congenitally underfed and weakened by untold ages of brooding over first causes. But your well-fed Goth seeking Nirvana is a sorry spectacle. Naturally prone to extremes, he sways in violent alternation between inertia and intemperance and, as befits his strenuous frame, overdoes Buddhistic renouncement, when the ascetic mood is on. He revels in tormenting himself. He discovers new sins every day, and new modes of atonement for them. He who once hunted the elk and aurochs through the wild tangles of primeval forests, now hunts another kind of game—moral duties towards that sinister abstraction "humanity." He postulates a creative entity, invests it with supernatural powers and a profound sense of goodness, and then grieves that it does not rise to his expectations in regard to mankind—an ideal subject of self-torture!

His chief amusement, at this moment, is wet-nursing the Unfit—dirty work, which he thoroughly enjoys. It is downright fakirism. The only thing that still sticks in his throat (to judge by his conduct, at least) is that notion of forgiving his enemies; I fancy his old manliness allows him to perceive, dimly, that the whole doctrine is based on sheer funk: the dread of not being forgiven when his turn comes. In every other respect, he has lost all trace of aristocratic feeling, and become a menial, a serf. Democratisation, he calls it. "What's wrong with the world?" he asks, with all the wistfulness of psychic dyspepsia.

"Can't I save somebody? Wouldn't a little 'useful untruth' help them, or cheer them up, at least?"

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I should say that the hope of humanity, if such a thing exists, lies in the uselessness of this kind of untruth. It is a mere subterfuge. Problems are not solved by talking about the weather. And, *àpropos* of that creative entity, I think our whole attitude towards it needs revising; I think we should take the old theocratic system whole-heartedly, or leave it. This method of approving of a God-made world in a general way while reserving to ourselves the right to grumble over details and suggest improvements—this mode of regarding revealed religion as "*encore désirable*" after the fashion of Maupassant's Bel-Ami surveying a buxom matron of fifty—is irreverent, and bad form. Decidedly bad form.

In the matter of our altruistic excesses, at least, there is no need for the stimulative influence of Vital Lies. We take to them like ducks to the water. It is so much easier to give than to refrain from giving! Even as it is easier to acquiesce than to doubt. Still, one wonders what Plato, who was saturated with Orientalism and morbidly self-conscious and fussy about the "lower classes," would say to the present state of affairs. During last month 171,122 persons applied for employment in the metropolis; meanwhile, the revenues of the private charities of London alone exceed five million pounds annually. What's to be done? Shall we multiply those five millions by ten—if only to see for how long a time that small sum would be deemed sufficient? Or else—the comforts of pragmatism being Greek to the proletariat—shall we turn off, for a change, this tap of self-indulgence miscalled philanthropy, and try the effects of a little benevolent non-intervention? I do not advocate the experiment; I am only an amused spectator, not unmindful, by any means, of the classical exemplar of the "Coster's donkey," or of the fact that there is such a class as the deserving poor.

Yet I cannot help recalling, now and then, a paper entitled "The Brutilitarian," which appeared some years ago with the motto *We have let Brutality die out too much.* Hear also what John Burns says: "This tendency towards

indiscriminate private charity and organised religious charity is demoralising the poor and the community. . . ."

Why should we breed our proletariat as if they were prize Pomeranians? Are they decorative? And of what value are their bodies or their brains in the event, say, of a foreign invasion? Mouths to be fed: that is all.

If I could interest myself in our herd of wastrels and unemployables, I might suggest to them various methods of reducing their numbers and thereby realising relative happiness. But I cannot; they are too remote for my sympathy, save in that conventional sense of the word which sounds so well and means nothing whatever. Shall I be disquieted because some improvident ruffian produces more children than he can support? Not likely! Let him pay for his frolic, like a gentleman. His sorrows may be deep, but they are not my sorrows. The zealous world-reformer, meanwhile, holds out hopes of Paradise till, one fine morning, swollen in numbers and despairing of extracting anything "tangible" out of such chill consolations, our sufferer arranges for a paradise after his own heart by tearing to pieces a painfully constructed social edifice at the bidding of some neurotic dreamer.

His aspirations are perfectly natural; I only observe, in passing, that they are not my aspirations. Fortunately, I need not trouble myself either with him or his reformer-friend, seeing that their logic, the logic of the emotions, does not acknowledge the fundamental principles of that of the intellect. Long may they thrive, both of them—if not for my edification, then for my mirth.

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What's wrong with the world?

Why, nothing whatever, so far as I am concerned. I have no cause to complain of the equator; the north pole may rest assured of my cordial approval, and I should be the last person to pick a quarrel with the Galapagos Islands, whose attitude strikes me as irreproachable.

As to poor old humanity, let it muddle along between pragmatism and paradise till the next Buddha-Messiah holds out a bait more appetising than the last; and so on, till the Day of Judgment—the day, to wit, on which the moon shall be converted into ripe green cheese. Let it wallow in unreason and moral biliousness, if so disposed.

COLD COMFORT

People who cultivate their ego at the expense of its environment deserve all they can get; *la joie de s'égarer* has a fixed price, like every other form of debauchery. On mature reflection, I conclude that the best way to improve the universe is to improve oneself, and not one's neighbours. Personally, therefore, I am not in the humour for the Messiah-business, particularly as, looking around, I see no lack of well-intentioned enthusiasts thirsting for the job. I can only suggest, as a means of cleansing certain Augean stables of sentimentalism, the old-fashioned remedy of a little honest work and an occasional dose of Turkey rhubarb.

Wonderful, how it acts! Those old Greeks, the pre-pythagoreans, were not far wrong when they located the seat of the affective emotions not in the heart, but somewhat lower down. Take care of the stomach, and the soul will take care of itself.

Rad. Rhei opt: quant. suff. There's comfort for you. . . .

The Decay of Dogma in the Church

By Joseph McCabe

THE recent Church Congress at Middlesbrough plainly marks a stage in the evolution of religious ideas. The old Voltairean belief in the possibility of an abrupt and complete extinction of so complex an organisation as Christianity has long passed from the minds of careful observers. It was a fallacious deduction from the experience of an age when there was always a rival religion, with its own dogmas and hierarchy, ready to displace the ruling creed. No religion, in the accepted sense of the word, will ever replace Christianity in the mind and life of Europe. The line of discarded and disdained temples by which we trace through several millennia the spasmic growth of man's religious emotions has no lesson for us. In the matter of religion the age of revolution is passed and the age of evolution inaugurated. There can be no revolution when there is no constraint upon the forces within and no force without that might invade.

The shape which will ultimately, or at any future date, be assumed by these evolving religious ideas of our time is not a matter for prudent discussion. The prophet necessarily supposes that a wiser generation will embrace the ideas which command his own allegiance to-day, and merely projects his creed upon the clouds of the future. Yet one may trace a persistent curve in the confused lines of contemporary religious development, and it would not be hazardous to prolong that curve into the near future. In other words, one may easily recognise that the abandonment of particular formulæ or dogmas is a characteristic of our time, and one may confidently forecast a time when the Church of England will not press even nine articles for the literal acceptance of its members. Already the Middlesbrough Congress shows it dare not enforce any formulæ on its more cultivated members.

The same tendency is, of course, discernible in all other branches of the Christian Church, and indeed in all the higher religions of the world. The notion, at one time popular, that Rome will retain its antique features for ages, and draw to its shelter the more nervous souls who find the pace of their own Churches too rapid, rests on a misapprehension of its position, and is quite out of harmony with the facts of contemporary religious life. It is owing to a mere accident of its domestic life, a miscarriage of Vatican intrigues, that it seems at present to occupy an exceptional position; and when the hour comes for the next Conclave the memory of the desolation which this belated experiment in mediævalism has brought on cultured Catholicism will probably ensure the sacrifice of personal ambitions and the adoption of a less disastrous policy. The reform will come too late to save the vast empire of the Popes. Its extraordinarily rapid decay in the Latin countries is not compensated by any real increase in the countries which accepted the Reformation, and its attenuated frame will consist merely of minorities in most countries, with, perhaps, a survival of power in the more backward Hispano-American States and the Slav Empire in the Balkans. And it will be a new Catholicism, giving an artistic interpretation of its ancient forms and changing its autocrat into a president.

The same positive culture which is relaxing the bonds of discipline and dissolving the lines of dogma in the Churches of Europe is already exerting a marked influence on the Asiatic creeds. The alert Hindu priest now finds himself surrounded by a large and growing band of native Rationalists and seeks a compromise with the insurgents. The Mohammedan teacher, not only in India, Turkey and Egypt, but even in the more scattered African colleges, has the same task of adapting his more slender dogmas to the science and history of modern Europe. The cultivated Buddhists of Japan are shaken by the waves which reach them from the remote centre of disturbance. Even the non-theological Confucian finds his ethical dogmas assailed as narrow and obsolete, and Persian orthodoxy is yielding to Behaism. The educated religious world is approaching uniformity; not by a general acceptance of dogmatic Christianity, but by a gradual surrender of the separative

formulæ which the accidents of geography and history have imposed on local creeds. *Per tot discrimina rerum* we move toward a stage when religion will consist of a firm belief in a Supreme Power, a vague and trustful hope of man's immortality, and a graceful acknowledgment that Kung-fu-tse, Buddha, Zarathustra, Christ and Mohammed were especial manifestations of the divine wisdom.

There are three prominent features of recent Church Congresses, and of the general life and thought of the Church of England which are focussed in such Congresses, which justify this modest forecast, not of the final development, but of the line of evolution. The first is the co-operation of the laity with the clergy. To the historian who surveys with genial eye the series of Councils from Nicæa to Trent and the synods and conventions of the Reformed Churches, this new feature is of great significance. It foreshadows a surrender of the older sacerdotal claim to exclusive or preternatural wisdom in matters of faith. Nominally, indeed, the power to teach and define is still reserved to the more strictly ecclesiastical gatherings, but we shall never again see a doctrine formulated by the prelates of the Church of England in defiance of any large body of lay opinion. The Roman theory of a preternatural guidance of its higher ministers always had a somewhat humorous aspect in the eyes of those who knew how every formulation of a dogma was preceded and prepared by the labours of a large body of obscure scholars; the Pope merely signed their collective verdict on the issue. The thin pretension of reformed prelates to some vague and undefined measure of this preternatural guidance is now virtually surrendered, and formulæ—or, rather, liberties—are prepared by democratic methods.

Hardly less instructive is the particular development of this co-operation of the laity and clergy. Some fifty years ago the prelates found it expedient to yield to the pressure of the laity and admit them to a common deliberation. They have already passed from a state of reluctant admission to one of sincere eagerness for the presence of laymen. When we reflect that distinguished laymen are now welcomed to the Church Congress, we must see a deep significance in the respective cultural value of, say, a British Association meeting or an Academy dinner and a

Church Congress. What would the Church not give to have the support of a tenth of our higher representatives of science, philosophy, art, and history? In spite of all its efforts and concessions, it has not even that proportion. There is an almost pathetic loneliness about such figures as that of Dr. Michael Sadler at these annual gatherings. History, philosophy, and art are hardly ever represented. Science was represented at Middlesbrough by Mr. Whetham. . . .

The few laymen of any distinction in culture who can be induced to attend the annual Congress are not, of course, the only scholars of our time who would admit, or even claim, membership of the Church. Yet it is a broad and deeply significant feature of our time that, at a moment when hundreds of thousands are ceasing to accept the teaching of the Churches and anti-theological works circulate by the million, hardly a single layman of repute will come to the aid of the clergy. The reproach goes from mouth to mouth that our men of letters and science and philosophy are generally indifferent or opposed to Christian dogmas, and works of great ability, assailing the Christian faith in the name of science or history, attain a circulation rivalling that of popular novels. Within a few years the Rationalist Press Association, an organisation with slender funds and no local means of pressing its literature, sold more than two million copies of a few anti-Christian works. The enterprise was immediately imitated, in the smallest details, by ecclesiastical publishing organisations who could rely on the local aid of tens of thousands of churches, yet, as far as one can gather, the circulation was certainly not one-fifth, possibly not a tenth, that of the Rationalist works. It was left to such men as Sir Oliver Lodge, Dr. Russel Wallace, Principal Lloyd Morgan, and Professor J. A. Thomson to make some reply in the name of science; to men, that is to say, who were unable to say a single word in defence of distinctively Christian dogmas, and could at the most profess a belief in those fundamental religious doctrines which in the eighteenth century brought upon the Deists the odious title of "infidels."

That the Church of England is indifferent to this impressive silence of our chief representatives of culture can hardly be supposed. It eagerly welcomes the ambiguous

pronouncements of Sir Oliver Lodge, the old-world and quixotic speculations of Dr. Wallace, and the faint encouragement of such distant sympathisers as Professor Thomson and Professor Jones. Indeed, it is well known that a number of efforts have been made to remove the too apparent reproach of this silence. I was once staying with a distinguished literary man when the post brought him a pressing appeal to declare his views on religion. The form enclosed to receive his august confession was printed, and had, I afterwards learned, been issued broadcast to men of cultural distinction. This was four years ago, but no returns of this interesting "census" have yet been published, though a volume was announced two or three years ago. Earlier inquiries of this nature (published by Mr. Tabrum and Mr. Manly and others) were vitiated by the extremely vague nature of the questions which the inquisitors thought it convenient to ask. They succeeded in including amongst the faithful such men as Lord Avebury, Mr. Balfour, Sir E. Ray Lankester, and Sir E. Brabrook (a director of the Rationalist Press), and inflated the list with men of an earlier generation and sonorous nonentities of this. In one of these works six out of a series of fifty distinguished living savants used definitely Christian language; four used vaguely Christian phrases; the remainder were careful not to use Christian phrases at all. And, as the whole group to which these men belonged numbered several hundreds, we may surely draw some deduction from the very slender success of this zealous and extensive inquiry.

In view of this general isolation of those whose achievements in science or letters lend a certain weight to their convictions we may confidently expect the Church to remove its ancient emphasis on dogmas. Such rare utterances on religion as we have had in recent years from this circle show that where there is a deep and sincere religious feeling at all, it is generally confined to Browning's formula: "Soul and God stand sure." As in the case of Browning, we may assume that all the rest is discarded. Such sophistications of Christian dogmas as are urged by Sir Oliver Lodge, which recall Symmachus or Macrobius justifying the gods of Rome, affect few and more or less embarrass the clergy. It is presumable that churchmen

are attached, not to formulæ, but to the truths they were understood to express.

A very different tendency in the life of the Church, which also, and especially, finds expression in Church Congresses, is the concern for what may broadly be termed social morality. Some future historian will probably observe how singularly fatal it was to the Church that the development of a culture antagonistic to its ancient doctrines coincided with the birth of aspiration in the mass of the people. One would almost suggest that Demos, witnessing the struggle of Church and culture, has taken the opportunity to cry a plague on both their houses and diverted all his energy into the task of bettering his condition on earth. In France, Northern Italy and Portugal one sees this plainly, and it, rather than a specific anti-Christian propaganda, explains why hardly one in ten of the working men in London (according to an exact census) attends church. The proportion varies much, but in several large towns a census has revealed a somewhat similar situation.

As a result we find the Church of England absolutely reversing its policy toward the working classes. When we recall the Church of less than a hundred years ago, we read the proceedings of the last Church Congress with an irrepressible smile. The Archbishop of York, the president and dominating spirit, had evidently one single aim in the Congress: to win the working men of a large industrial town. He blessed their Trade Unions, pleaded excuses for his wealth, and laughingly disavowed the idea that they had come to discuss ritual or doctrine. The life and ambitions of the working men occupied at least three-fourths of the attention of the Congress. For some time there has been growing in the Church a section that can only be described as the High-Broad Church; much attached to forms and vestments, very cavalier about dogmas, and largely Socialistic. A distinguished clergyman of this school was once urging an Agnostic, in my presence, to join and take office in his congregation. "The Church," he said, when my friend pleaded his utter disbelief of even fundamental religious doctrines, "has to-day nothing to do with what you believe." When I next visited that part of England, my Agnostic friend was still an Agnostic, but an important churchman.

This school is triumphant under the present Bishop of London and Archbishop of York; though it is understood that there is still an Archbishop of Canterbury. The future development of the influence of this school will probably lead to very stirring and interesting scenes. Its complete success would mean a dissolution of the age-old alliance of hierarchy and squirearchy and restrict the Church of England yet further to the less cultivated members of the community. That thousands of professional and wealthy men adhere to the Church, in spite of disbelief or indifference, for purely socio-political reasons, is a truism of modern experience, and any definite adoption of demotic views by the highest representatives of the Church will sever their connection. If the warning which Sir E. Carson gave to the Congress—that the Church must confine itself to such moral platitudes as: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"—be disregarded, such men as Carson will not be retained. But it is quite certain that Demos will not be appeased by the reiteration of maxims which have, from his point of view, been singularly sterile for two thousand years. Stewart Headlam once confided to me, after delivering an eloquent lecture on the brotherhood of men under the fatherhood of God, that he had given it without effect to large audiences of working men. Having the social history of Europe in my mind, I was not surprised. A very grave dilemma and conflict await the Church in this regard. It will probably, like Leo XIII., be forced to compromise and temporise. In any case, the emphasis will increasingly pass from dogma to ethic, from heaven to earth.

This double dilemma which confronts the Church—this task of steering warily between new culture and old formulæ and new democratic aspirations and old social traditions—forces it into an attitude of mere evasion in regard to dogma. A very characteristic episode occurred at the recent Congress. The only discussion of a doctrinal nature was on the question of miracles; a cardinal question in the Christian scheme. In view of the opinions published by such prominent and scholarly divines as Canon Cheyne and Dr. Hastings Rashdall, to say nothing of more outspoken German divines, on the historical value of the Biblical records, the discussion was profoundly important.

THE DECAY OF DOGMA IN THE CHURCH

The faith of most people in the divinity of Christ and the unalterable nature of His teaching and (supposed) institutions is essentially connected with the genuineness of the Gospel-stories of miracles. Modern history would give no encouragement whatever to the hazy and inaccurate statement that the triumph of Christianity in Europe contains any element of miracle, and therefore of itself proves the divinity of Christ and His Church. The central doctrine of the Church of England stands or falls with the Gospel-narratives of miracle. Yet, when Dr. Sanday had, in his discreet and hesitating way, represented the more liberal view and drawn on himself the anger of the more orthodox, the Archbishop of York placidly blessed both parties, with equal generosity. He appreciated the warmth of these stalwart defenders of "the inner citadel of the faith," but he begged them to respect "the advance guard," consisting of scholars like Dr. Sanday. It was an unhappy simile, though it seems to have impressed. These soldiers of the advance guard are not in the citadel because they think it indefensible, not because they may one day retire to it.

If one may or may not believe in the miracles and divinity of Christ in the Church of England, less important dogmas have little hope of being retained in stereo. The truth is that we do not in these matters witness the actual course of evolution; what we perceive is the belated expression of an earlier stage. In such a world the expression always lags far behind the thought. Sir Leslie Stephen once told me of a remarkable statement that Charles Kingsley made to him after a sermon. Stephen had accompanied him and heard his brilliant and impressive sermon —on Providence, I think—and, as they returned together, Kingsley asked him what he thought of it. He got an evasive answer, and, after reflecting for a few minutes, he said (I omit the characteristic stutter): "Do you know, Stephen, I ought to be either a Positivist or a Papist—and I'm damned if I'll be a Papist." There have been so many of these posthumous discoveries of heterodoxy among the clergy that one naturally distrusts even professions of orthodoxy. An Anglican clergyman, recognising me once in a train and appreciating me as a moralist (or casuist), insisted on exposing his position to me. He disbelieved

the most characteristic dogmas of his Church, without anyone suspecting it, and pronounced the creeds sonorously every Sunday with the mental reservation, he said, that "these are the things people believed a few centuries ago." To his surprise, my skill in casuistry did not succeed in finding any moral justification of his position.

These casual glimpses of the contemporary mind of the clergy cannot, however, be pressed into a general statement. Such confessions are necessarily rare. It is enough to note that the clergy now publish with impunity the most extreme views on specifically Christian doctrines. Hell has long been abandoned to the less educated clergy and the foreign missionaries; Heaven has merged into a vague philosophic belief in the immortality of the soul. The question of consubstantiation or transubstantiation, of the "validity" of Anglican orders, of the indispensability of baptism, or of the sacramental nature of matrimony or confirmation, is now understood to be the technical concern of a few conservative divines, and has shrunk to insignificant proportions in the general programme of Church deliberations. The atonement, which less than a century ago would have been pronounced the most essential element of the Christian faith, may now be boldly interpreted from any pulpit as a vague at-one-ment. The divinity of Christ and His miracles at least were assured, it was felt when the idea of blood-sacrifice was declared to be unessential. Then came the attack upon the literal accuracy of the Old Testament, diluting the older dogma of inspiration into the literary and æsthetic detection of a divine afflatus, not sharply distinguishable from that which one appreciates in Raphael or Milton, in the finer moral utterances of the Prophets and Psalms. The analysis inevitably extended to the New Testament; the miraculous birth and the triumphant resurrection—the most treasured and inviolable elements of popular Christology—are coldly ruled out as late interpolations; there remains only a Renanesque figure of a preternaturally great moralist who has had a preternatural influence on the history of Europe. But the relentless acid of criticism—and it must be carefully noted that in this department of culture the whole of the work is done by divines—continues to eat into the traditional fabric. It is discovered that late Jewish

morality had not been carefully studied when the morality of the Gospels was pronounced so far superior to it, and it is felt that the lay historian's version, or even Dean Milman's version, of the rise to power and the moral influence of Christianity in Europe has anything but a miraculous character. The last—the present—phase is that theologians are absorbed in meeting a growing belief that there never was such an historical person as Jesus Christ, and we find clergymen (*Hibbert Journal*, January, 1911, pp. 345–64) writing that the time has come for the Church to declare that it is indifferent to the issue of that struggle!

"Soul and God stand sure." One is free to question any other content of the ancient creed. A Bishop Gore may at times (as in the Beeby case) make a stern use of the nominal power and duty of his office, but that Don Quixote of the episcopal world is an expiring type. The archbishops survey the denudation of the doctrinal stratum in silence. I use the geological term advisedly. From the crests and ridges, the intellectual higher levels, of the Church the storms of criticism have worn, or reduced to diminishing fragments, the stout old layer of dogma. It still lies thick and resistant on the broad valleys. Lecturing in the provinces, especially "the sturdy north," I have had frequent occasion to put before large audiences the long story of the making of the heavens and the earth. Nothing is more familiar than to see and hear groups of stolid, cheerfully disdainful men (the women are speechless) issue from the room, mockingly repeating: "Millions of years!" In this broad class the stratum of dogma is effectively sheltered, its clergy must use its language, and its literature is pathetic in its untruthfulness and antiquity. Peculiarity of temperament may even put men like the Cecils in association with this uncultured world, and the circulation of the *Church Times* and *Guardian* implies a fairly large body of more or less literal, and generally educated, Churchmen. We might invert Archbishop Lang's metaphor and say that these are the outlying forces of the Church; in the citadel, the last resort, are the scholars, with a belief in God and immortality and a vague conviction that there was something specific in the moral message and influence of Christianity.

It is not strange that the bishops lament the shrinking of clerical vocations, and that the historical status of the English clergy is being entirely altered by the admission of large numbers of young men who are not "gentlemen." It is not strange that religious literature has shrunk into a slender and disregarded element of our vast annual output. One of the largest colonial booksellers once showed me a table in the centre of his immense store, in which he had, in despair, heaped up the religious literature on his hands and capped the mountain with a ticket announcing a uniform and ridiculously low price; and it was of no avail. What is strange is that Englishmen, witnessing this historic decay of the old dogmas, still suffer their national life to be controlled or hampered in most important respects by their implications.

The documents which have recently been published as an outcome of the Commission on Divorce very forcibly remind us that we are in this predicament. The English law of divorce is notoriously the most retrograde and most pernicious to be found in any modern civilisation which is not subject to the Church of Rome. The only exit it provides from the grave evil of an unhappy marriage is the committing of adultery; the alternative is a judicial separation, with every incentive to adultery, or a life of misery. This is, of course, a purely clerical piece of legislation, yet, in spite of the misery and irregularity it is bound to involve, we have (to speak only of recent times) endured it patiently for half a century, and it is only the fine-spirited protest of a few laymen that has at length led to a step in the direction of reform. The majority of the Commissioners appointed have recognised the disgraceful condition of the law and recommended that England come into line with other civilisations. Even now, however, when a very weighty body of evidence is put before the country on the question, our bishops inspire a Minority Report and threaten to block the way to reform.

A more slipshod and insincere document has probably never been presented to the nation's representatives on a great issue by men selected to discuss our social interests. One-half of the report endeavours to alarm us by suggesting crowds of men and women who are waiting to besiege the new courts; the other half blandly pleads that there is

no desire for larger facilities for divorce in any section of the community. Ancient Rome is forced into the witness-box with the careless inaccuracy with which it is usually compelled to render testimony in the pulpit; the customary and wholly false estimate of the social position of France is lightly adopted; and, because two eccentric Americans are quoted as resenting the more generous arrangements in the States, it is represented that social experience in the States is against the reform-proposals. We are naïvely invited to believe that judicial separations are more conducive to morality than divorces, and—what is to me the crowning infamy of this report—not the slightest consideration is paid to the deep and life-long unhappiness which our law imposes on thousands of couples who do not care to pay the price of adultery and notoriety for release from their unsuccessful marriages. And this report, we are told, is based solely on social experience and interests. It is based entirely on one of the most questionable of dogmas, and our bishops seem to be prepared, in the interest of that dogma and of the Church's authority, to run the risk of making adultery come to be regarded as a legitimate and proper way out of unhappiness. The attempt of the bishops is regarded with some sympathy by those who, at the opposite pole of the moral world, would like to see marriage replaced by a freer relation.

Hardly less lamentable is the enforcement, as serious truths, in nearly every English school, of the long list of Old Testament narratives which we know to be untrue. Then there is the lingering of clerical tyranny in regard to our enjoyment of the day of rest; and there is the growing practice of sending clerical deputations to the Home Secretary to demand additions to the staff of censors of our literature, drama, and pictures. In view of the real decay of dogma we are monstrously patient under these things. The lack of candour, the encouragement of mental confusion and sophistication, the growth of mental reserve and interpretation of the spoken word, and the issue of literature which is, in comparison with our lay literature, as slovenly and inaccurate as it is inartistic, are grave enough evils of the present stage of religious thought, but a graver evil is the indifference of the vast body of men and women who now stand outside the Churches to this

sustained interference with the nation's life in the interest of dogmas which are so lightly held within the Church itself. "The most pressing requirement," says the Rev. Dr. Cobb (*Hibbert Journal*, April, 1911), "is the official, formal, and public degradation of theology to its proper place in the Christian life." We may at least claim to have it reduced to its proper place in the nation's life.

(This discussion will be continued.)

Under the Collar

By the Editor

AGAIN there is evidence that the liberty of literature is being seriously interfered with. A few months ago the Town Councillors of Belfast discovered the works of Nietzsche and thereupon ordered them to be summarily destroyed and banned. At Doncaster, "Tom Jones" was discovered, denounced and burnt with all the pomp of the famous *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, drawn up by Pope Paul IV. in 1559 as part of the machinery of the Inquisition. Now there is another case. For some reason unexplained and unintelligible, Mr. Gilbert Cannan's novel, "Round the Corner," was placed on the Index of the Libraries, the embargo only being withdrawn after a two-weeks' persistent demand for the book on the part of friends, well-wishers and colleagues, who insisted upon having it.

We can afford to laugh at the hideous ignorance displayed by the Councillors of Belfast and Doncaster, but in the case of a living writer the matter assumes a public interest. At once a great principle is involved, vital to all creative work and expression, the principle of literary independence. In the present instance the ban was a flagrant abuse of unauthoritative office, showing that a secret council exists similar to the Papal Index of Rome, which ever since the sixteenth century was used to restrict speculative thought, education, ideas, progress, science and enlightenment on the strict ground always of morality. Now, this un-English Papal device is alien to the national spirit. We don't burn witches even to-day. Why should we burn books? But when it comes to a deliberate attempt on the part of tradesmen to injure a writer, the time has come to submit this specious form of Inquisitorial humbug to the common sense of young England.

The case of Gilbert Cannan is very definite and quite inexcusable. "Round the Corner" has been highly praised by nearly all the leading critics in the Press, and generally admitted to be by far the best thing the author has yet written. No honest opinion could possibly denounce the book as immoral, indecent, repugnant or offensive. On the contrary, the novel is a counterblast to much of the sloppy immorality of the day; in purpose essentially moral, it is the message of a perfectly sincere, thoughtful writer. Why then was it banned? On what authority have the Libraries acted? By what reasoning do salesmen arrogate to themselves the right to damage the year's work of an artist? Finally, how long are the writers of this country going to put up with this Jesuitical trade censorship?

The question arose acutely in December, 1909, when the Circulating Libraries Association announced their intention to set up a censorship committee to veto all books "which are regarded as transgressing the dictates of good taste in subject or treatment." It was to be a secret committee, but the plan failed because they overstepped the mark by requesting publishers to submit all books to them *before* publication. Even the notoriously timid publishing fraternity jibbed at that, authors telling them frankly at the time that they would not consent. Since then nothing definite has been done. There is the dramatic censorship fiasco for humorists to fall back upon. Books get banned from time to time, and there is talk; a few authors write to the newspapers and the subject is forgotten. The Authors' Society, which has a large membership and gives an important annual dinner, does nothing. It never seems to occur to writers that a little organisation and combination would suffice to put an end to this un-English custom and tyranny; so things go on and we have now two dramatic censors instead of one, and the Libraries just tip any author's work out of their shops that they d——d well please.

That is the position, really almost comic in the face of the fact that over 2,000 books were published last year—2,000 writers and more, therefore, with an Authors' Society and an Academy, yet too indifferent to look into the ordinary

trade conditions of their wares, or to put up any cohesive front to the tradesmen who exploit them.

The business man will naturally shrug his shoulders. "Serve them right," he will say. "If I want to sell pills and some chemists won't stock them, I buy them off or I fight them; but I don't swallow my own medicine." In the case of authors not much help is likely to come from the publishers. What then can a literary artist like Gilbert Cannan do? Alone—obviously little! He can ask his friends to talk. He can tell the Authors' Society—and what will they do? He can write to the Press! Quite so, but he is a seller. Publicity, display are indispensable. A "little window" is the entire machinery of his trade. As the Libraries Association is a union on the matter of censorship, and an author is merely a unit, the fight is unequal. He is "downed" just as Knox would have been but for the organisation and pluck of the railwaymen. So Gilbert Cannan is pilloried; morally put in the stocks, his work damned and branded, as if he were an Armenian pedlar hawking about indecent photographs.

As usual, it must be a very ill wind that blows no good, and there is the consolation of martyrdom and notoriety. Such is our strange hypocrisy towards life and art that it is a common joke for one necessitous writer to say to another: "Get banned, old chap. The public will read you then. You see, at present they've never heard your name," and the recording angel will bear witness to the sad justice of the contention. It is not a noble condition of affairs. Really, the astounding thing is that every writer does not deliberately get banned from the Libraries once every three years—which is eloquent proof of the healthiness of literature as opposed to the unhealthiness of the reading conscience. In these days of self-advertisement the temptation is strong. It shows how splendidly clean our literary effort is, how true the natural instinct of an artist is for honest expression, as, indirectly, how puerile and needless is this very censorship. That some kind of control is necessary no one will deny; but in almost every case the control of plays, books, songs or what not will refer to work which is not creatively artistic, not, therefore, the

product of genuine artists. In this category Gilbert Cannan's novel has no part or place. It is honest work. Its rejection from the Libraries cannot have been based upon any intelligent judgment of criticism or morality. The book was turned out of the Libraries simply because some unknown man or men so willed it. It is thus an arbitrary boycott, attesting to the existence of an Index; a tyranny which is a scandal.

What is to be done? Well, a very little organisation, combination, grit would suffice to beat down this trade embargo on books, and the first step is a Trade Union. That is all—absolutely. Some dozen determined writers with a fighting secretary and a lawyer, and converts would grow readily enough. The "big" men are not indispensable. If the Authors' Society declined to enter the Union as a fighting concern, let the Union form a new Authors' Society which would fight—there must be plenty of women writers with some practical knowledge of militarism. What is essential is cohesion. The Union would appoint a critical committee to adjudicate on similar cases, and if the finding was against the Libraries, a systematic campaign of propaganda and pressure would be begun. The moment an aggressive authors' policy got going, publishers would instinctively see its advantages, the advantages of cohesion and co-operation with writers, as they saw it over *The Times* Book Club struggle. And the hour that the publishers showed signs of co-operative activity with the authors, that same hour the Libraries would capitulate.

It is merely a matter of elemental business organisation. Nor are the Libraries altogether to blame. They have to look after their interests. If authors are too disunited and publishers too timid to take the initiative, the business men who run the Libraries naturally will take it. After all, these gentlemen are only timid too. It is really the chaos and weakness of the bookselling market that causes this anomaly in the book trade—that the people who decide what is, or is not, a moral book are the men whose sole business it is to sell it. Now, if Lady Amelia's maid were to take away her ladyship's emerald necklace because "it did not suit her," out of the house that wench would cer-

tainly go. Even a high barrier of tariffs (as Mr. Bonar Law knows) cannot keep out a desired article. The real reason that the Libraries act is because no other body has the nous to do so.

As an economic fact, the Library system is bad both for publisher and author. It probably only lives owing to the high price of English books. The whole condition is largely the result of the flabbiness of publishers as a body. The publisher of Gilbert Cannan's novel certainly never deliberately published it as an "immoral" book. Yet he is thrown down, and materially injured just as much as the author. Thus a secret censorship of the middlemen actually is able to defy the entire literary world of England, including the publishers, because neither are actively organised nor in any business sense co-operative, though they are in every essential and material way integral and interdependent. In the present instance it was obviously to the collective interest of publishers to defend the trade, yet they did nothing, whereas the mere threat of a joint remonstrance from the publishers would probably have sufficed to break down the Libraries' attitude. There is no cohesion, whereas the Libraries are united. It is the question of capital and labour, only in literature labour is beaten all the time, simply because of the want of an ordinary Trade Union.

The supineness of publishers is curious, if only as a reflection upon their business methods. They are the people who have some right to control both quality and quantity of books, but that they, *plus* the authors, should allow themselves to be dictated to by the people who sell their goods is the very height of commercial timidity. It is the direct reason of our "pretty pretty" art, our doll's-house magazines, our Stock Exchange objection to "the serious" on the stage and in fiction, that conscious upholding of the unreal as evidenced by the tinsel detectivery of Sherlock Holmes and the drawing-room "crook" play.

That is the goal—the business co-operation of authors and publishers—that writers must make for, if an end is to be put to the outrageous uncertainty of Library censor-

ship stifling the literary expression of to-day. The growth of irresponsible trade control is making publishers more and more timid, as the growth of competition is disuniting them. The amateur who pays for publicity tends more and more to glut the market. Some day authors may be forced to realise that in an age of fierce competitive commercialism art must be syndicated, just as much as coal, and when they do the first step will have been taken towards the foundation of an authors' publishing co-operative society.

The trouble is threefold: (1) the lack of literary organisation and union among writers and publishers; (2) the fact that in England art and abstract thought are not treated seriously by a public interested mainly in action and politics; (3) the human element which plays, as always, its warring and conflicting part. Free competition, individual success, ambition, jealousy, antipathy, rivalry, greed, the personal moment, in short, the difference between the product of life and matter as a saleable commodity. The Libraries—as every editor knows—are largely swayed by the letters they receive, generally from old ladies (worthy, antimacassar people), who regard art with pious misgivings and, having little else in life to do, spend part of their leisure in denouncing it. Librarians are merchants. To them a book is a sausage or a tin-tack; the thing is business. If sufficient cranks or old ladies write about a book, out goes Neil Lyons, Cannan, Sudermann, Anatole France, or some such writer, and in comes some finnicky prurience such as "Three Weeks."

Why not, if the army of writers, publishers and journalists make no attempt to stop them? It is not for the Libraries to philosophise, to reason that books, like babies, are born into the world for life and not for the amusement, benefit, or use of old people. If the old folk are stronger than the young, good. A business man is not there to argue, his job is to sell. Seven old ladies, one parson, a Welshman, and a village publican have all written up, say, about Cannan's book—ten letters in all, eight sheets most of them, threatening to withdraw their custom. Ten vetoes! How many for? None! The Library "Boss" scratches

his head. "Bit warm," blandly suggests the secretary, who has not read the book; and out it goes.

Now, if any josser, for moral or patriotic reasons, had interfered with Douglas Morkel's goal-kicking in the match at Twickenham, he would have been mobbed for a certainty. The old ladies who write letters to Libraries and editors know that—oh, they are quite cunning after their lights! Art is a public cockshy in this country. Your scribbler is a bad fellow! Probably with long hair! Every man can have his knock at a book. There is no sporting etiquette about it at all. The old maids and professional purity-punchers have a free field. Nobody else bothers or writes letters, because only cranks and such folk would write. "How dare you, sir, print an article by Gaby Deslys?" one of these watchdogs wrote to me. "I thought," I wrote back, "that, as all London went to see her in tights, they would naturally care to know what she was like on paper."

The other day an American editor strolled into the office. "Twenty thousand," he sneered. "My circulation is three million!" "Good heavens! what do you sell? Pyjamas?" I cried. "No, sir. Muck. A woman's paper! How? Canvassed. Got the women to write me what kind of stories they fancied. From thirty thousand replies I know the recipe. I buy a story and rewrite it—make all the boys fair and all the girls oval-faced. The author! Oh, you don't know your job. I buy him—I edit his story for my three million women. Art, did you say? What do they know about art, or care? I'm a merchant. Muck's their line, and I see that they get it."

Such is the merchant attitude of the Libraries. To them it is of no account that a book is a live thing; that "Tom Jones" will live when all the good folk of Doncaster are resting underground; that Zarathustra will speak long after Ulster has accepted Home Rule, and even the present Government has passed into oblivion. That difficulty has always beset the great works of man. How to sell? How to obtain publicity? That has always been the problem of genius, and it is so—to our national shame—as much

to-day as it was when the Papacy put its thumb—and thumbscrew—upon Galileo. At a time when science is breaking down the beliefs, doctrines, traditions and contentions of the world so rapidly that we cannot even keep abreast of them, literary independence is still a sham in our midst. Because of a few old ladies who control the Libraries it is becoming harder and harder to write a true book. Mass production obviously does not favour selection. It is controlled by the standards of the mob. We stand in the exact opposite to Russia, where art is free and politics are taboo. Here the nigger on a box in Hyde Park can preach sedition every Sunday, whereas the writer is the most shackled artist in Europe.

The sweetest caroller England has had for some time died recently in misery, and now that he is dead the work of Richard Middleton will live. With his memory before us, the latest attempt of the Libraries, without any reason, to smash the sale of a book written in all sincerity and published by a responsible publisher, should rouse authors and publishers to adopt some effective insurance policy. Every genius, thinker, *Bahnbrecher*, is aware that he will have to contend with the ignorance and intolerance of his time, whether he is a Shelley or a Darwin. But when the tribunal which condemns is not even a recognised body, is secret, entirely without authority, status or justification, then there must be something very rotten in the state of authors' affairs, which it is well-nigh inconceivable they should continue to submit to. Such a condition is discreditable to the literary life of the country. It implies that we accept Papal methods without even the luxury of a Pope. To authors it means that a man may at any moment find himself boycotted and ruined by some unknown agent who has no more moral right to interfere with the joint product of himself and his publisher than has the fellow with the squee-jee in Piccadilly.

Such a condition of artistic subserviency is unthinkable in Germany. Hauptmann, for example, ever since his play, *The Weavers*, has been in strict disfavour at Court, but all Germany reads and supports him. If any trade organisation in Berlin were to boycott a book—unless for some

very sound reason—the Press would be up in arms in a week. Here the Press is strangely timid in all artistic matters. We have no Maximillian Harden in England, though it is true that Harden has not many advertisements. None the less, he is a great power. He has knocked down forces no English newspaper would venture even to write about. The only boycott of the kind in Germany is done by the Prussian State, which bans *Simplicissimus* from the railway stalls, with the result that it is one of the widest-read journals in the empire. That is the difference. Art is adult, at liberty there. Here, we have Hoochee-coochee and leave literature to the "old man."

True, the "old man" is in hard case these times, but "old women" still affect him. More than ever it is necessary in England to clear a way through the jungle of the commercial output for those writers who have truth in their souls and the heart to say it. As the public generally will not help, because not sufficiently interested, as the Press and book-circulating organisations are largely influenced by a minute, but notably bellicose, section of that public, and are thus too timorous to take action, authors will find it more and more necessary to unite, if freedom of literary expression is to be preserved in this country. The real evil of our chaotic system lies in the fact that it is always the "big stuff" that is attacked and never the bad work. "Muck," that is what sells, as the American editor put it; or, as we would say, Trash. About the immorality of that no old lady, crank or publican, ever writes, because, to give them their meed of credit, they are not aware that it is trash. How should they? They imbibe by rote. The things they fear most are ideas, truth, originality. The need is of union, or literary freedom will sink more and more under the collar.

Play of the Month

In the Mile End Road

As everybody seems to be "doing it"—rag-time and the Kinema—in the West End, I went down the Mile End Road, the most spacious thoroughfare in London, for this month's artistic refreshment, and certainly found it at "The Pav." in Whitechapel, where the famous Russian Jewish actor, Maurice Moscowitch, is giving his repertory to an almost exclusively Jewish audience. Seats are cheap down there, but the vast house is crammed, hats on, free smoking, beer and "kosher," with hardly a Christian to be seen; a spontaneous enthusiasm, an almost dreadful attention: it is a spectacle not to be missed—human, racial, inspiring.

The repertory is big, both melodramatic and artistic, among the plays being Tolstoi's *Living Corpse; King Lear of the Jews*, a characteristic costume-play of old-time Continental Jewdom; *The Powers of Darkness; Daniel Danielli*, a situation play of race feeling and idiosyncracy, and many others, including *Man and Superman*, which is promised as a novelty. Transported, set down in a fashionable West End theatre, Maurice Moscowitch possibly might miss the greatness he attains to in Whitechapel; but there he is unquestionably the very "Bon Dieu" of actors, and after the second act he generally saunters on before the curtain and makes a brief speech, sometimes explanatory, but always witty and personal.

All the same, there is no doubt about the man's acting, which is restrained and extremely intelligent and interpretive. In the East End they don't expect the stage heroine to roll her eyes at the gallery and smirk like the cover of an American magazine; neither do they require their hero to flourish his hat at the word Britannia, to save virgins from double-dyed villains, to speak all the while to the audience, or to perform any of the tricks and *clichés* of West End popular actors; and what is more, they don't ask the author

to write artificial absurdities. And the result is that astonishing thing in a London theatre, an all-round artistic honesty of author, actor and stage-manager. Consider what this means. These East End chaps and women with babies in their arms sit there for three hours and a half actually listening to the play intelligently. The wined giggle of the West End is entirely absent. No one guffaws at regular intervals. The actors have a chance. The play has a chance. At first it is somewhat disconcerting to us of Mayfair. The spirit of entertainment is absent. The audience has come to see a play, acting, not a commercial composition; but presently a man gets interested, soon he begins to realise that this Moscowitch is giving an interpretation of his part remarkably free from all histrionic artificiality; that he is presenting a character and not himself; that what he does seems to be logical and necessary, and finally that here is a very notable actor who could give points to any West End actor-manager in London, whether knight or commoner.

His performance of Tolstoi's posthumous play, *The Living Corpse*, is especially interesting. It is quite *découssu*, as a play, merely a series of scenes, a study in psychology—which West End audiences would be bored to tears at. The few who saw its production at "The Court" would be astonished to see what Moscowitch makes of it. His rendering of the drunken sot in the restaurant scene is absolutely a creation. For an hour the man sits on a chair before a bottle of wine and talks, yet one listens spell-bound. No accessories. Bare walls for the scene. Simply a drunkard trying to explain himself and his actions. All that Tolstoi put into the character, Moscowitch brings out; the curious Russian introspection, his morbidness, weakness, sensuality, that blend of bestiality with high principle that is a peculiarity of the Slav. The play, too, is admirably stage-managed. The gypsies can sing. A purely Russian atmosphere broods over the tragedy. We understand what Tolstoi meant. We realise the conditions of Russian society. We see that the man who, superficially viewed, appears to be worthless, is, in reality, the cultured product of a certain civilisation.

Moscowitch himself is tall, slim, with a fine head and very beautiful hands. His restraint is astonishing. One

might expect the excessive gesticulation of, say, the Amsterdam Jew Market, but instead we find a carefully-considered control of voice, manner and movement, and singular variation in the different parts. He seems to have no pet gestures. He never shouts. He is a free actor, unlabelled, at liberty to be this or that, droll or tragic, melodramatic or mystical; precisely, in short, as the *rôle* ordains, and what actor in the West End can say as much?

It is, indeed, an experience, this revelation of artistic honesty down in Whitechapel, positively a shock. "Mrs. Henry Hawkins" will sit for hours listening to Tolstoi, Gorki—long, intellectual, rather dull plays, too—whereas Kensington and Suburbia admittedly find such plays too morbid for their digestion, and prefer musical comedy. No doubt, Moscowitch is quite right to stick to his *milieu*. Near the Strand, servants'-hall opinion might think him too "deep," and what is he to Peter Pan, when down there he is the very Pan himself, fretting all the strings of life and tragedy! See a palm in Kensington Gardens and it looks odd, unlovely, yet how strangely beautiful in the sun of the desert! Plainly, Moscowitch is a wise man. He won't grow very rich at Whitechapel, to be sure, but they love him just as well; he belongs to the Ghetto. Why not? There, at any rate, his art is true, and the Jews of Whitechapel have a national theatre—which is more than we have at this end of London. Certainly, the Yiddish tongue presents difficulties, but hardly more so than the mute kinema or the inarticulacy of our stage, and those who know a little German can understand sufficiently. The "Pav." is easy of access, standing almost opposite St. Mary's Station. Perfectly safe, of course! Try it. The bold young man who takes a cigar and a nice girl down there won't regret it. For folk with cars there are boxes. But the best way is to tramp down the Mile End Road and talk to the people on the way. It puts one in the mood to enjoy a subtle and artistic performance.

S. O.

Books of the Month

BIOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

THE PROMISED LAND. By MARY ANTIN. Heinemann. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

"AN illustration of what the American system of free education and the European immigrant can make of each other." In these words of the authoress there lies the keynote to this brilliant piece of autobiography. Mary Antin, youngest and proudest of America's children, was Mashke, the Russian Jewess, living there within the "Pale of Settlement," and learning in her earliest years that if the Gentle child spat upon her, she, being of her race, must submit. And before you have finished her book you will understand how America takes in that ceaseless stream from the lands of oppression, and moulds them and stamps them with her own image. The book is a notable contrast of the Old World and the New World in their ways of treating the plastic and subtle material which the Jewish race presents.

LETTRES DE MME. DU DEFFAND À HORACE WALPOLE (1766–1780). Première édition complète. Publiées d'après les originaux par MRS. PAGET TOYNBEE. Londres: Methuen. Tomes 3. £3 3*s*.

THE work of these three volumes—nearly two thousand pages—was brought almost to a conclusion before her death by Mrs. Paget Toynbee, editor of Horace Walpole's Letters. More than half of the 838 letters are new, and three-quarters of the rest are now for the first time given in their entirety. The introduction, relating to the letters, to the writer of them, and to the recipient, is made long by no sacrifice of brevity. The notes are numerous and sufficient, and are, like the letters themselves, the introduction, the preface, and the title-page, in French. As is well known, the letters were dictated to a secretary by a blind French lady who, at the age of seventy, fell in love with an Englishman of under fifty—or, rather, "showed him an exalted tenderness for which the name of friendship is weak and that of love ridiculous." It is not less difficult to describe the nature of Walpole's response, and fear of ridicule has in part concealed it, but this monumental edition of Mme. du Deffand's letters will stimulate further attempts. Above all, they add to the epistolary stock of a generation that does nothing in that kind for itself.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF GEORGE SAVILE, 1ST MARQUIS OF HALIFAX. Edited, with introduction, by WALTER RALEIGH. Clarendon Press. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

As Sir Walter Raleigh says in his admiring introduction, "the rare delight is to find John Bull a wit." For Halifax, in his words, "employs the subtlest resources of wit in defence of the practical expedient, the middle course, the reasonable compromise." Everyone has to know something about the Trimmer, and nowhere can he learn it better than in *The Trimmer's Opinion of the Laws and Government*. When Halifax was advising his daughter on the subject of clothes and furniture he bade her remember that nothing was truly fine but what was fit. The same thought, implicit everywhere in this admirable volume, makes him a good tonic for those who think the opposite, if they would only read Halifax as well as admire him. No man ever had less superfluity than Halifax, and yet avoided dulness. Language with him was an instrument, not a disease, and his "Character of Charles II." creates him a peer of Bacon and of Selden.

RECENT EVENTS AND PRESENT POLICIES IN CHINA. By J. O. P. BLAND. London: Heinemann. 16s. net.

A casual stroll into an Oriental bookshop may reveal little to the casual observer; to a student of the East it is often the saddest of pilgrimages. What an incongruous jumble of Western futility the crowded shelves present. There scholarship is puffed out to resemble literature, there between stout covers the missionary sterilises the black and yellow soul, and, lastly, there, in the darkest corner, lies the dusty flotsam from the shipwreck of prophecy. Mr. J. O. P. Bland, late Secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Council, has forsaken the sweets of office for the dried gourd of the minor prophet. He has become the Malachi of modern mandarins. Calling upon Young China to abjure Sun Yat-sen with his "fantastic railway schemes," and follow him, he treads the noble Six-Power Path of International Finance. Some 480 pages go to prove the utter lack of Chinese patriotism or conscience or sense of honour in matters financial. The burden of Mr. Bland's song-recurring passion is that China must be financially controlled. "To maintain, in the matter of finance, for instance, that China should be 'mistress in her own house,' is a dangerous creed; China . . . whose only reliable revenues have been collected under the supervision of foreigners for more than half a century." Surely half a century's contact with the enlightened foreign financier would suffice to bring forth a host of incorruptible Chinese chancellors! Alas! Mr. Bland sometimes thrills us in page and then chills us in footnote. He quotes Sir Robert Bredon: "The *haute* finance of the world cannot be anything but international. It would be well that bank management should realise that it is no longer national, has no patriotism, and no more conscience or sense of honour than modern business morals hold to be sufficient." So it all comes down to a question of modern business morals—the morals of Monsieur the Internationalist in luminous contrast with the morals of John Chinaman.

Reading between the lines, it would appear as if the author were a little more than doubtful of a Chinese millennium brought about by international finance—"It is an open secret that before joining the international group last April, and even later, Russia used every effort to persuade the French financiers to adopt an independent line of action. Similarly we know that when Russia and Japan vetoed Article XVI. of the currency loan, German diplomacy encouraged China to disregard the veto, with the object of creating difficulties between Russia and France. Finally, we know that, in 1909, Britain and France had definitely declared effective control of loan funds to be a *sine quâ non* for the ultimate security of bondholders, and that, nevertheless, this condition was not enforced in the Hukuang and currency loans." Poor China! No wonder that the late Secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Corporation is pessimistic about your future. But though the dragon has vanished from the Chinese flag, giving place to a screaming discord of many coloured slabs, not even the international sportsman can hunt him from his ancient hills. There, coiled gigantically upon himself, he abides his time and draws fresh impetus for the ever-recurring cycle of his energies. Already there are signs of stirring. You will not find them in the smooth rescripts of officials, or even in the grandiloquent manifestoes of foreign educated students. They pass from province to province, from mouth to mouth in the form of ballads by nameless men whom we may call The People. They are not very complimentary to Monsieur, or Meinherr, or Gaspodin, or to the patriots whose names end in "stein" or "thal." Yet they are ballads. And the nation that is engaged in fanning its ballad literature to flame is worth watching.

GEORGE BORROW: THE MAN AND HIS BOOKS. By EDWARD THOMAS. Chapman and Hall.

The very irregularity of this book and the slippered ease of the author's style, not without occasional fits of pungency and acute insight,

succeed, better than a tidier and more ordered consideration would have done, in making us savour the peculiar quality of Borrow's wilful genius; and we get a very lively impression of the roomy personality of the man, moving through life with a sort of uneasy arrogance, and—when once he had chosen to adopt it—always in the heroic pose. "He succeeds not only in evoking things that are very much alive, but in suggesting an artist that is their equal instead of one who, like so many more refined writers, is a more or less pathetic admirer of living things." That is well said, and expresses the real secret of Borrow's power and charm.

CATHEDRALS OF ENGLAND AND WALES. By FRANCIS BOND. Illustrated. London: B. T. Batsford. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

Mr. Francis Bond's "Introduction" has a liveliness which is unfamiliar to readers of books on cathedrals. "It does not interest one much," he writes, "to hear that an acquaintance whom we saw in London in the spring is now in the Australian bush; it does interest one when one hears that he had to leave the country because three years ago he was detected cheating at cards. So, in a cathedral, it is not enough to know that such a vault was put up or such a row of windows inserted in the fifteenth century. . . ." But this fair promise is not thoroughly well kept. Now and then Mr. Bond relieves the pressure of unadulterated fact by such a device as the printing of an epitaph to John Moore Napier at Chester. Now and then he grows warm, as in his criticism of St. Paul's, as "primarily an aisled church, with, incidentally, a dome thrown in"; or he ventures to compare Winchester to "some stranded prehistoric monster, sprawling over the ground," or remarks that the situation of St. David's is extraordinary. But he does not aim at more than as rich as possible an outline of the history of each cathedral, with the help of some photographs and plans on the scale of 100 ft. to the inch. These outlines are excellent of their kind, but to-day this kind is already old, and should be decrepit. It is far too ready to do without that general culture and grasp of history which alone can give vitality to the private affairs of any art. The chapter on Winchester virtually begins: "First Period.—Bishop Walkelin began work in 1079; in 1086 a grant of oaks was made by the King. . . ." Nobody ever remembers anything from this kind of writing, and memory is necessary, for the book is a miracle of heaviness for its size. A single chapter in a better style might suffice to give the reader a clue which would interpret and vivify the others; the book might become a genuine introduction to our cathedrals, and make the study of them "more interesting," which Mr. Bond perceives to be necessary.

ESSAYS AND GENERAL LITERATURE

THE NATURE OF WOMAN. By DR. LIONEL TAYLER. Fifield. 3*s.* 6*d.*

The qualities that have won Dr. Lionel Tayler success as a lecturer on biology combine to make his book a profound and valuable study, to which it is impossible to do justice in a short notice. It is notable for its calm sanity, its sound logic, and the manner in which every statement is supported by proof. Dr. Tayler deplores the fact that "woman's emancipation has not been founded on her natural capacity." "The womanly woman . . . is spoilt, distorted, and ruined by the strain of modern conditions"; her need is for a serene atmosphere, and the right ideal that of "calm and rest for the woman and of energy for the man." "Nothing so wearies a woman as tameness of life," he continues. For these words we bless him, and when he explains, in terms that compel conviction, how and why the modern man "has become less interesting to his wife as a companion, as well as to himself," we find ourselves ardently wishing that some philanthropist would put this book into the hands of every married man. It would assuredly increase the sum of human joy more than a

score of public libraries. The chapter on "The Confusion of Modern Thought" is particularly interesting; indeed, the whole book is one that no student of modern life should miss. The flippant and the serious alike will find in it much food for reflection.

THE LITTLE WORLD OF AN INDIAN DISTRICT OFFICER. By R. CARSTAIRS. Macmillan and Co. 8*s.* 6*d.* net.

It is always good to read the tale of a man's life work, and to learn just what were the little things that made the business of life seem worth while to him. And it is of the little things that Mr. Carstairs is chiefly concerned to tell us. In his introduction he records the retort of a Radical politician: "Ah, that's just it! You know the *little* things, but *we* know the *big* things," by "we" meaning the politicians who had never been out of England. Mr. Carstairs leaves to "we" the discussion of the abstract question of our right of occupation of India. He did the work that lay to his hand in whatever situation he happened to find himself; and his book is a record of faithful service. He did his job, and he seems to have been a just steward, though hindered and hampered in his labours by the red-tape of officialdom. One of the most interesting chapters in his book is that which deals with this paralysing serpent, which strangles in its blind coils of ignorance the individual energies of the man who sees and knows. "What I have ventured to call 'the departmental mind,'" he writes, "is a mind in which the quality, admirable in itself, of zeal for the department is so strong that it excludes sympathy, or even toleration, for anything that does not fit in with its ideal. To such a mind any new proposal, not originating with the department, was likely to be wrong; local peculiarity was a thing to be got rid of; and a plan that could be worked in one place but not in others was inadmissible."

That is excellently put, and mildly for a man who had some of his most cherished schemes of reform either rejected or returned to him as mere useless bundles of red-tape. But imagine such a state of things in the government of India, that world of warring races and religions! Of course, this callous indifference, like most of the mischievous things in life, is due to a lack of imagination. The machine-mind cannot realise anything beyond the circumference of its routine. Mesmerised by its own humming, it thinks the world is all right if its wheels are going round, and never for a moment considers that they may be spinning to no purpose. It is dreadful to think of machines governing men; machines grinding men to powder, not through any malicious intent, but simply through sheer crass stupidity. We trust that everybody who is interested in India will read this book, those who think that the English Government can do no wrong, and those who think it can do no right. We especially recommend it to our friends the Indian revolutionaries, and ask them to consider this picture of a single-hearted man struggling against almost insuperable odds to do his duty by those whom he is called upon to govern. We think that most of them would hesitate before taking upon themselves such a task. If they have any imagination—but, can it be merely due to *our* lack of imagination that we have been able to hold in subjection so long that unimaginable incongruity of antagonistic ideals which is India?

KEBLE'S LECTURES ON POETRY. Translated by E. K. FRANCIS. Clarendon Press. 12*s.*

To minds panting for some new thing, these discourses will seem lifeless as a faded curtain hung for a couple of generations in the half-light of an old library. But in spite of much that is out of date and even insignificant, they show a clear if somewhat narrow vision of what goes to the making of great poetry; and it is impossible for anyone, however opposed to Keble's politics or theology, to escape in these pages the winning charm of a mind so inflexibly attached to things lovely and of good report, so free from æsthetic or learned affectations, so subtle, so delicate, so sweet and so modest. Take this from among his *fioretti*:

"No man can in sorrow charge God with being unjust or hostile to him so long as he has at hand but one blade of grass or one bud upon the trees."

Keble was too tightly buckled in his spiritual armour to be on easy terms with Byron or Shelley, or for the matter of that, with Shakespeare or Burns. Spenser and Wordsworth are his favourites among the moderns; of the ancients he understands best Homer and Æschylus, and Virgil incomparably well. But with all its lack of broad humanity the book is neither emasculate nor academic, and necessarily takes a high place among the most interesting memorials of the humanising influence of classical literature on Christian feeling. To this man of God poetry was nothing less than the progressive working of the spirit of God through the ages; and he holds Homer and Æschylus to be as much chosen prophets as Isaiah or Jeremiah, called, although not enlightened as to their calling. So that at times we seem listening, not to lectures delivered from the professor's chair, but rather to addresses from the steps of the sanctuary heard obediently long ago on Sundays of undisturbed belief.

Mr. Francis's translation is agreeable and easy; but it is a pity that he has chosen to give the quotations from the versions of various English translators, instead of in the original.

THE CHILDHOOD OF ANIMALS. By P. CHALMERS MITCHELL. Illustrated. Heinemann. 10*s.* net.

The genesis of this very interesting book was a series of lectures which Dr. Chalmers Mitchell delivered about a year ago at the Royal Institute. The lectures were for children, but the book is one for the intelligent, though not necessarily the learned, general reader. In fifteen chapters Dr. Mitchell discusses the whole complicated question of youth in animals, its duration, its changes, its purpose, and so on. He uses his wide knowledge and observation to build up theories in somewhat the same way as Darwin did. On such questions as the metamorphoses of insects, the variations in the coats of young mammals, the comparative fecundity of different grades of the animal world, and the sense of parental responsibility, he is particularly suggestive. He is at one with much modern opinion in his idea that the appearance and the actions of young primates are really vivid proof of our common origin. His remarks on domestic pets will perhaps do something to dispel these absurd anthropomorphous explanations of the acts of animals. And he writes, too, on the taming of young animals with a great deal of shrewd sense. No one realises more justly the natural limitations of animal intelligence in the various groups. In his capacity as head of the London Zoological Gardens Dr. Chalmers Mitchell has ample opportunity for that close and constant watching which does away with sentimental prepossessions and builds up instead a real basis of animal study. That is why his book is so valuable. It represents the detailed work of a true observer, that work which is so often the groundwork to the most startling generalisations.

Some of the illustrations do not strike us as particularly happy.

WITHIN: THOUGHTS DURING CONVALESCENCE. By SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND. Williams and Norgate. 3*s.* 6*d.* net.

IN reading this book, with its great personal charm and engaging sincerity, the reviewer found himself haunted by a saying of Mr. Chesterton's: "I am the man who with the utmost daring discovered what had been discovered before. I did try to found a heresy of my own; and when I put the last touches to it"—but there the similarity between G. K. C. and Sir Francis Younghusband ends, for whereas the former discovered that his new-made system was, after all, the old orthodoxy, the latter has apparently not yet discovered that his new heresy is a very old heresy indeed. Briefly, the experience of an excessively painful motor accident, and the agonies suffered during convalescence, have convinced Sir Francis of the impossibility of believing that we are under the care

and guardianship of a kind and Almighty Being who is ever watching over us to protect us from all evil. Such a benevolent Being could have prevented the accident, but He did not; and if it be pleaded that suffering is inflicted by God in order to make men perfect, the fact is that this supposed aim is far from being always attained, and "a Being who was really omnipotent *could* have made me perfect without using suffering as a means." Wherefore, seeing that he cannot believe in a personal God without, and since we must have faith in "Something," the author suggests that "it is on our own selves that we should put our trust—on our own individual selves and on one another," because "we all alike are animated by one great purpose and impelled by the same inherent spirit welling up within us, and binding us all together in one indissoluble kinship. . . ."

It is all as old as the hills, and as unsubstantial as the rainbow; *plus cela change, plus c'est la même chose*. The extraordinary thing is that every writer who comes forward to express his doubt of the Divine benevolence in view of the phenomena of suffering, writes exactly as though he had personally made the discovery that such a problem exists, and overlooks the mass of testimony which finds its most typical expression in the cry, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." The belief which Sir Francis Younghusband asks us to abandon has been firmly held by men and women who have had experience of extreme agony; and, one person's experience being as real as another's, it would not seem that suffering necessarily destroys faith and trust in a benevolent Deity in the sufferer himself.

Again, Sir Francis's idea of omnipotence stands, shall we say, in need of reconsideration: an omnipotent Being may in His wisdom deem it better to govern the world according to fixed laws than by constant miraculous interpositions; and, again, omnipotence may be—we think it is—self-limited by the fact of human freedom. And as for saying that God *could* have created man perfect, we retort that perfection of *character* could not have been created ready-made by omnipotence itself.

Finally, the author's suggested alternative—belief in a purely immanent, universal spiritual force, instead of the personal and transcendent (as well as immanent) God of Christianity—we have only to leave theories for facts to find it break down completely. For we are *not* "all alike animated by one great purpose"—Turks and Bulgarians, criminals and police, White Slave traffickers and White Slave victims; and we cannot, therefore, with advantage substitute unlimited trust in one another for trust in God. That kind of thing does not work, and in practice we do not for a moment imagine that it works. Remains, then, "trust in ourselves": but if man had found himself sufficient to trust in, would he ever have turned to God? Is not the fact that he has always done so pathetic proof of his recognition of his own insufficiency? That which is Divine "within" us makes us worshippers, but is not a possible object of worship; for—to conclude, as we began, with a quotation from Mr. Chesterton—"That Jones shall worship the god within him turns out ultimately to mean that Jones shall worship Jones." And Jones knows better than that.

THE PROBLEM OF "EDWIN DROOD": A STUDY IN THE METHODS OF DICKENS. By W. ROBERTSON NICOLL. Hodder and Stoughton. 3*s*. 6*d*. net.

If this book should prove to be the final authority, settling the problem of Edwin Drood for all time, it will serve a distinctly useful purpose. To the average mortal it was always an unprofitable study, since whatever was ultimately decided by the learned, his chief concern was that his beloved Dickens only gave him half a book when he wanted a whole one. What mattered to him was that the book was never finished by Dickens, not the method Dickens would probably have employed in finishing it. Why should not these curious students of the methods of Dickens proceed further, and having, as they think, discovered by the internal evidence

of the existing books the exact method of Dickens, proceed to produce regularly new books such as he would have written had he lived? Surely a new terror has been added to death for the famous author if students of his works decline to leave his unfinished work where he left it by cutting the knots he had not untied. It is to the credit of Sir Wm. Robertson Nicoll, however, that all his fellow-speculators on the problem of *Edwin Drood* accept his conclusion that Datchery was really Helena Landless, disguised, and that Drood was actually dead in the Queen Anne sense. So that is something, and if the problem appeals, one can get all the evidence by which the conclusion is, or can be, reached, in a splendidly produced book, excellently printed, for 3*s.* 6*d.* The bibliography on the subject compiled at the end of the book is perfectly amazing.

Scottish Life and Poetry. By Lauchlan Maclean Watt. James Nisbet and Co. 12*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Watt is a fervent, perhaps a jealous, lover of his country and her poetry. He speaks of the Bard of Glenorchy's poems as being "uncontaminated" by English; to him Logan's *Cuckoo* is "as haunting as some bits of Keats"; *The Seasons* are "as great an achievement and as epoch-making in power as anything in English literature." "Joanna Baillie," he tells us, "struck a note which was taken up later by William Wordsworth"; Hogg's poem on the *Skylark* is three times extravagantly praised: it is "unequalled, twenty-four lines of molten melody"; "nothing on the same subject has come near its lilt of immediate life"; "for a piece of verse . . . in pure English, the *Skylark* is a real gem of Scottish lyric utterance."

The book shows considerable industry and very wide reading of Scottish verse, and the chapters on the life of the people are informing. But it needs a surer hand than Mr. Watt's to use language so heavily charged with metaphor and escape disaster. As a sudden illuminant metaphor can be highly effective, but we do not catch the meaning of this in a flash—"a production . . . through every page of which well up rainbow bells of exquisite beauty. Indeed the work seems to have been composed as a raft to float these, which he strings upon a very thin and artificial thread of love." And why is the author's imagination haunted by so many windows? We have "windows of to-day," "a window in his heart," "windows of humour," "imagination's windows," "windows to his soul," "thought that has windows that open heavenwards," and one or two more. "A dancing faun tying garnets and nuggets of unhandled gold around *her* neck" is an unfortunate slip; and surely Matthew Arnold did not say of Alexander Smith that he was "a phenomena of a very dubious character."

Such things make one thankful, on Mr. Watt's behalf, that Samuel Johnson—"who," he says, "could be one of the most swashbuckling tyrants that earth ever knew"—cannot now get at him.

The book deepens the impression that in Scotch poetry there is only one man unquestionably great, and that is Burns. But there are plenty of poets with the sweet throstle-note, and of their songs the book is in the main an interesting repository, or museum—but, as I said before, with too many windows.

The Adventurous Simplicissimus. By Hans von Grimmelshausen. William Heinemann. 7*s.* 6*d.*

The translator somewhat coldly commends the literary merits of this book, and considers that it is important chiefly as a contribution to the sociology of the period of the Thirty Years War. He speaks also of the "photographs" of contemporary manners which it presents. If I am not entirely mistaken it has, simply as literature, a value not much inferior to Benvenuto's Autobiography; and "photographs" is not a happy term to apply to work which glows with colour like a canvas of Rubens. It is coarse in parts; but few of us are really anxious for the millenium—

it would be far too dull—or concerned to purge the old writers of their grosser humours. These things are to be forgiven because they are such stuff as life is made of, and lest in an overnice age we should lose the power of thinking and writing honestly about ourselves. At any rate this is not a book for babes or for the mealy-mouthed. Cast adrift as a poor little waif of ten years among the most abominable horde of cutthroats and harlots, hangers-on of the armies of both sides, the writer became too early familiar with the villainies of life to have much respect for the *honesta factu, non honesta dictu,* of Lord Herbert of Cherbury. His pages are strewn with the litter of great camps; the waste, the wreckage, the violence, the squalor, and the outrageous devilry of forays and beleaguered cities. He has an immense vitality, and that first-hand acquaintance with the facts which can afford to squander detail in reckless profusion, and which takes, as it were, by violence all the wealth of a vocabulary which the man of letters painfully acquires second-hand. It is this careless, untrussed style of his, this way of sowing broadcast with both hands, as it were, in his stride; his humour, his whole-hearted zest for anything that comes to hand—war, gallantry, tomfoolery, cheating, quackery, thieving, and reiving—that makes this a real live book. And along with these things there is the half-pathetic, half-humorous backward glance of self-pity at the childish figure of himself, realised in the light of every kind of contrasted abomination—the poor little Simplicissimus, devout and innocent, dwelling with the Hermit in the wood. The writer works his vein far too unsparingly not to have exhausted it before the end is reached; but I know nothing so good in their way as, say, the first three books: human comedy at its broadest and best.

The translation has been admirably done, and the volume, with its delightful type and get up, is a possession to be ranked among the classics of its kind.

WALKING ESSAYS. By ARTHUR HUGH SIDGWICK. Edward Arnold. 5*s.* net.

> "Yes, reader; there is nothing new,
> Nothing the least exciting.
> One truth, one only I pursue,
> In all this waste of writing—
> Old as the hills on which we stood,
> Trite as our path descending,
> That walks are good, that walks are good—
> I ask no better ending,"

sings Mr. Sidgwick in the epilogue to his *Walking Essays,* but we are inclined to think that it was a mistake to try and make a book out of his enthusiasm. As fellow-enthusiasts, we found all this talking about walking just a little tiresome. It is no more possible to talk about walking to any purpose than it is to talk about breathing. Certainly the book aroused old memories; and when we were getting a little bored by our author's loquacity, or by his occasional elaborate facetiousness, we found our minds retracing old tracks—along white roads under the midsummer moon, or knee-deep through honey-scented heather in the glare of August, or breasting a cold hillside in the teeth of a driving snowstorm, or along the Embankment under the April stars. Perhaps this was all that the author intended; and we should be grateful to him because he has reminded us of those enchanted nights under the lee of a haystack, and of those golden noons when the deepest bliss was to lie on one's belly in the bracken drinking in through burning lips the clean cold waters of the singing moorland burn. But, even now, the December sun is kindling to silver and russet the rimy fells, and it is much too good a day to sit in the house writing about walking.

ANOTHER DEVICE. By STEPHEN PAGET. Hodder and Stoughton. 5*s.* net.

Here are a collection of fifteen essays of a miscellaneous and popular description. They range from such subjects as "The Genius of Pasteur"

and "The Influence of Berkeley," to "Hospital Life" and "Latin for Girls." Why the author should have seen fit to republish them in book form is not quite evident. Their general level is quite undistinguished, though they display a certain ease of manner which saves them from utter nonentity. The best essay is, perhaps, "Hora mortis nostræ" (rather an interesting disputation upon the moment of death), and the worst is, perhaps, "The Right Sort of Girl," the title of which is alone sufficient to damn it. Mr. Paget's idea of perfection in young women seems to tend to the type of the athletic suburban. It is a gloomy idea.

THE OXFORD BOOK OF VICTORIAN VERSE. Chosen by ARTHUR QUILLER-COUCH. Clarendon Press. 6*s*. net.

This does not strike us as a satisfactory book. The selection is mediocre, and there are omissions that cry aloud to heaven. Of course, in the case of later poets, some of these may very likely be arbitrary, but it would have been almost better to leave out a name altogether than insert only or mainly inferior work. And, to tell the truth, there actually are really important names that make no appearance in the index. Where for instance, are the comic poets (Calverley, Lewis Carroll, Gilbert, J. K. Stephens, Owen Seaman)?—or do they not count in "Victorian verse"? And where is Chesterton, who is surely a much truer poet than some of the names here? These are just haphazard queries—there is no space to go deeply into the matter. As for individual poems that should have been included and have not been, their name is, so to speak, legion. But, then, one man's taste is, fortunately, not another's. Let us end with a word of praise. It is satisfactory to see here the work of the men of to-day in such large quantities, the work, for example, of Davies, Gibson, Abercrombie, Masefield, and Middleton. If we cannot congratulate Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch on his anthology, we can at least admit that it must have been a thankless and laborious task to get it together.

THE TRAINING OF THE MEMORY IN ART. By LECOQ DE BOISBAUDRAN. Macmillan and Co.

This work, far too little known, even in France, has at last been translated, and we congratulate Mr. Lowes Luard, the animal painter, who is responsible for the English version, upon introducing a book indispensable to both art student and teacher alike.

No great place is claimed for Lecoq as a painter, but as a teacher his gifts amounted to genius. Rodin, Fantin Latour, Cazin, Legros, were among his pupils, whilst Whistler certainly came under his influence.

Now, when everyone is talking of "visualising," it would be well to read these pages, and realise what the word means; the layman would soon grow to a greater enjoyment of nature, and the artist would grow daily in understanding.

VOX FEMINA:

THE UPHOLSTERED CAGE. By J. P. KNOWLES. Hodder and Stoughton. 6*s*.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO? By ELIZABETH ROBINS. Heinemann. 6*s*.

Not much need be said about *The Upholstered Cage*, which is a book on the lines of Mrs. Braby's Handbook for Women, showing the large economic disabilities and the hardships and tribulations awaiting women in modern social conditions. It is, however, a sound book, though it is difficult to think that this picture of feminine life will advance the question at issue. The real trouble in all this is civilisation, the excess of women over men, the unwillingness of the modern generation to accept the simple life; hence all these feminine tears.

Elizabeth Robins is such a clever writer that one sees with regret her incursion into melodrama on the subject of popularity of the day: "The White Slave Traffic." The truth about this question has been said by

Bernard Shaw, Taylor, and Neil Lyons, who wrote an admirable pamphlet on the subject. We refer all readers who wish to know the truth, instead of distorted inaccuracies, to these three writers. However, many people will read Miss Robins's novel because it is clever, it is interesting, it does give one a thrill, and especially women who are so extraordinarily ignorant about life will find in these pages something that will really make hairpins fall out. The great mistake Miss Robins made was not to write a book entirely about the matter. The first part has really little to do with the latter half, and is obviously out of place.

FICTION

THE REEF: A NOVEL. By EDITH WHARTON. Macmillan. 6s.

Mrs. Wharton is one of the very few authors using the English language for whom the writing of novels is essentially a fine art. One can observe the technique more easily in a brilliant book such as this than in her masterpiece, *Ethan Frome*. There the passion was so overmastering, the single issue so penetrating and absorbing, that it was only when the book was read through that one was inclined to examine its manufacture. But here we find ourselves continually admiring her skill—in this point and in that the psychology is so subtly observed, here and there the emergence of fresh crisis is so shrewdly contrived, throughout the entanglement is so cleverly tightened—we are aware of her admirable technique. It is customary to compare her with Henry James, and with some measure of reason. But in many respects she is wholly different. She is interested in another sort of way, and in different things. Her plots in essence are far simpler and more direct, and she expends no subtlety which is not exactly calculated to further the end. She would raise often a moral point of a kind which he would scorn to raise; but there is less straining at intellectual gnats, a more direct interest in the intensely vivid facts of life. She is not a mere intellectual machine just calculated to get out of life all that it can afford of cynical amusement and food for curiosity; in some ways she seems to cherish the ideals of the conventional American lady, but she has contrived to refine her whole treatment by sinking such sentiments as she may possess under her simulation of the intellectual machine—and this is wholly a question of technique, the technique of Mr. James applied to the outlook of Commonwealth Avenue, Boston.

This novel, *The Reef*, is like an elaborately planned problem in chess. The author has skilfully placed her men in a position from which it is almost impossible for the player to extricate them, and we watch him floundering as he is constantly checked. We liken it to a game of chess rather than to something more serious for just this reason, that we feel that all the involved persons might have broken through the heart of the problem if they had not been bound by the conventions of a game not of their own choosing. But they are true to their prescribed parts, and that entirely saves the novel from flippancy, though it does not prevent us from having constantly to remind ourselves—"Remember she was that sort of woman; he was that sort of man. You wouldn't have done it, but he or she would."

The situation is a promising one. George Darrow, believing that he has been slighted and probably rejected by that delicate lady, Mrs. Leath, passes the time in Paris endeavouring to amuse a high-spirited and intrepid little governess, and oversteps the mark by seducing her when she proves to be in love with him. The incident meant little to him. It acquired significance because it took place at a time when he was on his way to visit Mrs. Leath, but had been put off. A few months later he arrives at Mrs. Leath's country house, in middle France. He finds himself accepted by this lady, with whom he had had a romance before her first marriage. He finds almost simultaneously that the governess of Mrs.

Leath's little daughter is Sophie Viner—the lady of the "incident"—and Mrs. Leath asks him very anxiously his opinion of the girl, whom he is supposed to have "met"; and it next appears that Mrs. Leath's stepson is secretly engaged to Sophie Viner. Thus there are four lovers in the house, two of them with a secret, and several observers. Mrs. Wharton has wrung the last ounce of interest out of the entanglement. She has arranged situation after situation in which the nicest difficulties are triumphantly overcome by her, and the most delicate phases of character are presented with extraordinary finesse. The problem as she has created it allows of no satisfactory solution. Darrow is so cool, so dexterous, a diplomatist that he is not by any means to be caught out on the score of his own mistakes. Mrs. Leath is so delicately idealistic, that it will not be easy to convince us that her hero is imperfect. But Owen, her stepson, is passionate and quick to discern with the eye of jealousy, and Sophie is also passionate, still in love with Darrow, unrepentant, a girl of headstrong impulse, bound to give her case away, as she does, and to triumph in the end by an all-round renunciation. It was Mrs. Leath who afterwards observed "that at no time had anyone deliberately spoken, or anything been accidentally disclosed. The truth had come to light by the force of its irresistible pressure." This is exactly how Mrs. Wharton made it happen, and she has exactly achieved her end in her series of brilliantly managed scenes.

THE TEMPLE ON THE HILL. By ELSA DE SZÁSZ. Sidgwick and Jackson. 3*s*. 6*d*.

This book, the first of its author, and written, moreover, in a language not her mother-tongue, is, in its simplicity and truth, and the nervous and flexible manner of its presentation, something of a notable achievement. It has that curious lack of focus, that tendency to expend itself at the beginning over characters that prove to be but subsidiary, which is characteristic of some Slavonic literature, yet these are faults of small importance compared with directness and sincerity of matter and method. There is a touch of genuine metaphysics in Julián, the boy who felt a passionate loathing of all forms of passion—"a fierce resentment against all things weak and vulnerable"—the boy who becomes a priest with but half of the necessary vocation—love of God, but none of his neighbours. He and the beautiful Temple which he strove to build—that Temple for which he ground every iota of money and work out of his people, refusing them absolution unless they obeyed—he and his Temple are the dominating figures of the book, even when the story of Anuce holds the page. And yet the red-haired child Anuce, who is married to the well-to-do old father of her boyish lover, Ciprian, is a pathetic and deftly-presented figure enough. The charm of the book is not only in the vivid description of the peasant life and the admirably unforced sequence of events, but in the subtler note which the character of the priest and the dominance of his uncompleted Temple both convey.

A REGULAR MADAM. By ALICE WILSON FOX. Macmillan. 6*s*.

A harmless and pretty story of a plump and high-spirited damsel, who crosses the sea to Canada when that country is still in the winning. Her life at school and her girl friends enter largely into the book, which would make an admirable gift for a schoolgirl, but a protest should be entered against the fact that it is being sold presumably as a six-shilling novel for adults.

THE SPORTING INSTINCT. By MARTIN SWAYNE. Hodder and Stoughton. 6*s*.

"'It is in London shops nowadays that the greatest sins against conscience are committed, as well as the most perfect acts of self-denial. Last week, for instance, I held an ermine stole in one hand, and a cheque-book in the other for five minutes, and in the end I won the battle.'

"'I congratulate you! What did you do?'

"'I bought the stole, of course.'

"'Then you lost the battle.'

"'Not at all. I have a Nonconformist conscience. I triumphed over it. In my case, every act of extravagance is a moral victory.'"

And there are about 300 pages of cleverish conversation like this. All the characters in this book dance, motor, golf, and lead frightfully dull lives. They have arid personalities, and the author ought to know that the novelist should evoke from his reader sympathy for at least one of the characters. This he does not succeed in doing. "'Who are the Fabians?'" asks someone. The answer comes, "'Oh, they are a class of people who encourage apoplexy in their elders.'" On which the principal character in the book comments, "'I have never heard of a Fabian woman who retained her figure after she was thirty-five. I am almost forty.'" This is Mrs. Ellershawe. Neither in her nor in her stupid husband—nor, indeed, in the impeccable Major—are we able to take much interest. Yet there is sparkle in the book. The author has brain stuff. It is a pity he does not pour it into better vessels. They talk better than they act. And the sporting instinct? That is explained on p. 202. "A man may have religion, brains, education, position, anything you like, but if he hasn't got the sporting instinct he is no good. In my opinion it is the finest, cleanest thing that exists nowadays. If you abolished it in England we should be worse than the rottenest nation in Europe." It was this, apparently, which kept Mrs. Ellershawe straight!

THE CROCK OF GOLD. By JAMES STEPHENS. London: Macmillan. 5s. net.

MR. STEPHENS makes a mortal maid and her divine bridegroom sing to "the lovers of gaiety" a song which ends: "Has the attorney enchanted thee? . . . Come away! for the game has begun lightly, the wind is sounding over the hill, the sun laughs down into the valley, and the sea leaps upon the shingle, panting for joy, dancing, dancing, dancing for joy. . . ." No one who knows Mr. Stephens' poetry will doubt that he can very well sing such a song as might undo the attorney's enchantment. He has a capacity for lightness and gaiety which can only be called blitheness, a very rare quality. Blitheness runs and dances all through this narrative, saves it and makes it. It is unconsciously, and, alas! too consciously also, aimed against the sadness which is due to the fact that man "has departed from nature, and lives by crafty and twisted thought." It asserts, and when it does not assert, it almost proves, that "a Leprecaun is of more value to the Earth than is a Prime Minister or a stockbroker, because a Leprecaun dances and makes merry, while a Prime Minister knows nothing of these natural virtues." We are positively assured that the Crown of Life is to be found not by the Thoughtful or the Good, but "the Gay Ones, the Adventurous Ones, the Careless Plungers." An old thief declares that it is easy enough to have brains, but not "a little gaiety or carelessness or childishness." It is, however, the chief merit of the book that it unconsciously declares what, by an indiscretion of art, it makes the subject of half a dozen sermons. We are a little tired of hearing that "The good are always the merry, save by an evil chance," but we shall never be tired of a merry heart that goes all the way through a novel of over three hundred pages. The story has flaws in it, which possibly Mr. Stephens would laugh at, and he can afford to, since he trips on and on with so agreeable a mixture of *naïveté* and choiceness. He has never written a poem so pleasant to read, nor is he likely soon to find a rival for lightness, quickness, and gaiety in talk and narrative.

ELIZABETH, BETSY AND BESS. By LILY SCHOFIELD. Duckworth and Co. 6s.

As may be guessed, all three names represent one young lady who is a charming and quite untamed colleen. The variants of her name represent her varying moods. The Betsy mood serves to convince an

unusually unpleasant father that the delights of bog-trotting and adventure should be exchanged for the discipline of a school. The Bess mood prevails during the conflict between the young lady and the resources of a well-organised English school. And Elizabeth emerges to the credit of all concerned to reward the devotion of the young man, who in an original manner had watched over her from the start. A good story, well told.

PHILOSOPHY

ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR AS PHILOSOPHER AND THINKER. By WILFRID M. SHORT. Longmans, Green and Co. 7*s.* 6*d.*

In striving to give a coherent account of Mr. Balfour's achievements in pure thought, the author has set himself a far more difficult task than appears on the surface. But he has succeeded. A clear image emerges, an image for which the readers of *Philosophic Doubt* and the *Foundations of Belief* were already prepared, a model to those who aspire to learn that language is given us to conceal our thoughts, a pleasing exemplar to that large section of humanity which is deficient in volitional strength, intellectual honesty, and capacity to think out any matter of the mind to its logical conclusion. "Surtout, mon ami, point de zèle." That is Mr. Balfour's comfortable creed. He is the prince of obscurantist metaphysicians.

POETRY AND DRAMA

LYRICS AND POEMS FROM IBSEN. Translated by FYDELL EDMUND GARRETT. Dent. 4*s.* 6*d.* net.

WHETHER or not Ibsen is a poet in his own tongue, his translators certainly never manage to convey any sense of poetry into English versions of his work; and the exercises of the late Fydell Edmund Garrett prove no exception to the rule. His rendering of "Brand," included in this volume, contains much vigorous and ingenious verse; but, at the best, what a crude and clumsy English poem it makes! As to the lyrics, there is not one of them that rises above the level of energetic doggerel. However, poetry and slang are proverbially untranslatable; and Mr. Garrett has only failed where others have failed before him. If the translators of poetry were always poets themselves, we might get more satisfactory results; but, of course, poets have more important business than the reproduction of other men's work.

THE ARGONAUTICA OF APOLLONIUS RHODIUS. Translated by R. C. SEATON Loeb Classical Library. Heinemann. 5*s.* net.

THERE have been worse epics written since the *Argonautica*, as well as better. Its reputation from the beginning has remained in the hands of the learned, and has steadily decreased. This edition, with text and prose translation on opposite pages, can hardly affect the matter. Apollonius repeated an interesting tale, garnished it with a thousand flowers of mythology, and protracted it to epic length in spite of a master—Callimachus—who said that a big poem was a big crime. Passages like the one where he describes night drawing darkness over the earth—"and now the wayfarer and the warder longed for sleep, and the pall of slumber wrapped round the mother whose children were dead"—suggest that he was born only to minister a little to Virgil's greatness.

A POSY OF FOLK-SONGS. By R. L. GALES. Herbert and Daniel. 3*s.* 6*d.* net.

It is a dewy garland of homely flowers that Mr. Gales has gathered for our delight, grateful to sight and smell, after the bouquets of scentless blossoms which the literary horticulturist produces from his hothouses in such profusion. We are not so absurd as to attempt to criticise the posy. We can only express our gratitude by telling other folk about it. Well,

Mr. Gales has gathered songs in France and Germany and Greece, and turned them into such racy English that we are hardly conscious that we are listening to translation. If we had had the space we should like to have quoted the whole of the delicious "Carol of Béarn," or the gruesome "Legend of St. Nicholas," or "The Temptation of St. Anthony," or—but we should never know where to stop, if we once began transcribing our favourites from this priceless book.

LYRICS, SONGS, AND IDYLLS. By REGINALD ROGERS. Routledge and Sons.

Mr. Rogers has something to say, which is not always the case with young poets of this age, who are more interested to show how they can say anything. There is a strong emotion in his short poems, but he is content to let it express itself without care for its form. So sometimes he hits, sometimes he misses, for this disregard of style is dangerous. With this method it is too easy to be bald or commonplace. The greatest who have tried it, like Wordsworth, have not escaped these pitfalls, and Mr. Rogers must not mind being told that, like them, he sometimes fails. The method is in itself a proof of sincerity, for it is adopted by those who scorn style as a trick or artifice. Of course, when successful, when the pure emotion gushes of itself in perfect shape, it is admirable; and on some occasions, as in "A Life," Mr. Rogers strikes the true note, which to do even occasionally is no mean achievement.

PLAYS BY ANTON TCHEKOFF. Translated by MARIAN FELL. Duckworth, 5*s.* net.

Four of Tchekoff's plays are included in this volume—namely, *Uncle Vauya, Ivanoff, The Sea-Gull,* and *The Swan Song.* Of these *Ivanoff* strikes us as by far the most remarkable. It is a very powerful and sinister play upon the theme of temperament. *Uncle Vauya,* too, is impressive, and, perhaps, equally gloomy. As far as gloom is concerned indeed, the same can well be said of *The Sea-Gull,* which is one long agony of mental depression and despair. But it lacks coherence, and leaves one bewildered. Moreover, the symbolic idea of the dead seagull is carried to an absurd length. The last piece, *The Swan Song,* is a mere trifle of a few pages—pathos merging into sentimentalism. That, in fact, is one of Tchekoff's pitfalls—he is too much on the verge of tears. For a great artist he is often perilously near the border-line of exaggeration. Improbable situations are common. He is certainly a psychologist and a vivid creator, but there is something unsatisfactory in his method. But the extraordinary skill and freshness of his dialogue makes him always interesting and suggestive.

POLITICAL

TWO GREAT TARIFF TRIALS OF 1912. By W. E. DOWDING, editor of *The Free Trader.* With an Introduction by Sir Alfred Mond, Bart., M.P. National Press Agency, Limited. 3*d.* net.

This pamphlet of sixty-four small pages gives a striking collection of instances of the world-wide revolt against protection in practice. They are drawn from the actual sufferers under the system in the United States and Germany, countries held up to us as exemplars of the blessings of a "scientific" tariff. The story, told clearly by Mr. Dowding, is full of encouragement for those who take the wider view of the development of economic principles to which Sir Alfred Mond refers in his highly suggestive introduction. It confirms Sir Alfred's contention that the progress towards general Free Trade during the past century and a quarter is steadily growing with the growth of "that general economic education which is as surely undermining Protectionism as it formerly killed Mercantilism, based, like it, upon ignorance." For propagandist purposes nothing could be more effective than the quotations from speeches of the President-Elect of the United States, in which Dr. Woodrow Wilson ruthlessly exposes the work-destroying and trade-restricting Protectionist

tariff, the foster-mother of Trusts, and the main source of political corruption. The lesson taught by Dr. Woodrow Wilson is enforced by the account of working-class degradation in the wool factories of Lawrence and in the mills of the Steel Trust. The chapter on the failure of the German tariff, even from the standpoint of export trade, and of the revolt of the consumers against the law-made misery for which it is responsible, is equally effective.

TRAVEL

THE SEA AND THE JUNGLE. By H. M. TOMLINSON. Duckworth. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

IN an exotic and luxuriant style, eminently fitted for the subject, Mr. Tomlinson relates his travels in the Amazon region, calling up visions of the terrific growth of those tropical forests—of that fierce and threatening vitality of nature which Daudet has immortalised in one of his tales. Interspersed with these pictures there are rich anecdotes—the macabre history of Captain Davis, or that other one of the steam shovel—a little masterpiece, conceived in the glowing, sardonic vein of Mr. Joseph Conrad. "A vivid record of actual experience": so the work is described, on the cover. We call it an astonishingly good book: a noble yarn from beginning to end.

GREECE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. By PERCY F. MARTIN, F.R.G.S. Fisher Unwin. 15*s.* net.

THIS painstaking survey of the financial and political status of modern Greece comes at an opportune moment. But it is inclined to be a panegyric. Were it a *coup d'œil*, as the title implies, we should learn a little more of the country's defects. Nor is it, as claimed in the foreword by Prof. Andreades, always up to date.

"Among the several diseases which are prevalent in Greece, intermittent fever is the commonest, the primary cause being the deadly miasma arising from the marshes on the sea-coast and upon the low-lying lands of the interior."

We seem to be reading North's *Roman Fever*. Is this all our author can make of it? No; for "intermittent fever is also (!) disseminated by a species of mosquito which breeds in the marshes, and it is only by the draining of these latter and the destruction of the mosquito larvæ that any hopeful results can be looked for." Now this is all wrong. The draining of marshes is a labour of Hercules, but "hopeful results are looked for," and indeed obtained, by the persistent *quininization* of the populace. The marshes can wait. Besides, our author does not seem to be aware that some of the most fertile and non-marshy tracts of Greece are precisely the most deadly. And does he know that in 1905, for example, there were about a million cases of malaria and six thousand deaths in a total population of 2½ millions? If he realises the import of these frightful figures, why is there no record of the patriotic labours of men like Prof. Cardamatis, and not so much as a mention of the name of Major Ross, who, although he is only an Englishman, has done more good to Greece than fifty generations of her chattering politicians?

The present barrenness of the land is attributed wholly to Turkish deforestation (p. 38). Surely this is altogether a mistake. Granted the Turks cut down every tree in the country, it must be remembered that the majority of native timbers is of a kind that sprouts again from the root after amputation, and that, therefore, the effects of Turkish barbarities would have disappeared by this time. No; it is the browsing goats, those picturesque but pernicious quadrupeds, who have been and still are the ruin of the landscape and of its natural resources, and until effective legislation is enforced to reduce their numbers and limit their grazing-places, Greece will remain the desert she is.

Malaria and the goats—these are the twin scourges of Greek humanity and Greek nature, and a book such as this should have dealt more

adequately with them. Full as it is of valuable data concerning internal administration and prominent local personalities, it requires a corrective such as the malicious but ever-youthful "Roi des Montagnes."

ITALIAN TRAVEL SKETCHES. By JAMES SULLY, LL.D. Constable. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

A WANDERER IN FLORENCE. By E. V. LUCAS. Methuen. 6*s.*

These two books on Italy are quite unlike, but both of them are good. Mr. Sully, after a survey of Italian travel methods in olden days, takes us in leisurely and scholarly fashion to Rome, to the upper reaches of Anio, and along the Tyrrhenian to Palermo. The *Wanderer in Florence* surpasses its claim to be a *guide-book both practical and æsthetic.* It is a charming account, by a man of culture, of the historical and artistic glories of Florence.

THE PAGAN TRIBES OF BORNEO. By CHARLES HOSE, D.Sc., and WILLIAM MCDOUGALL, M.B., F.R.S. Illustrated. Two vols. Macmillan. 42*s.* net.

This is a work of absolutely first-class importance, which will certainly obtain European fame amongst all those interested in the primitive races of the East Indies. The head-hunting tribes of Borneo have long attracted the ethnologist and the scientific observer, and Messrs. Hose and McDougall have been able to make use of the learned work of Nieuwenhuis, Roth, and Furness, in their present vast and comprehensive study. But they are, themselves, extremely erudite, enthusiastic, and thorough, and their volumes abound in the minute and intricate details of native life, a complete understanding of which can clear up so much of what is dark and apparently incomprehensible. Thus they have been able to throw light on many of the symbolic customs of such tribes as the Klemantans, the Kayans, and the Kenyahs, and to unravel, as far as it is possible to unravel, the strange workings of taboo and of spiritual fear. Head-hunting itself is really a highly intricate and mystical undertaking surrounded by a great wall of custom and ritual. For the people of North Borneo are not bloodthirsty on the whole, and are little addicted to torture. But, as with all savages who live in the forests, they are deeply superstitious, and their existence is governed by hidebound tradition. The writers give a fascinating account of the communal life of typical head-hunting tribes; they speak from personal experience, and their descriptions have an air of vivid reality, which is something quite apart from the dry statistics of the pure scientist. Their chapters on "decorative art," "ideas of the soul," and "animistic beliefs," are very noteworthy contributions to our knowledge. It is curious to find the Kenyahs consulting the omens in much the same way as the ancient Romans. The entrails of a chicken, the liver of a pig, the flight of a hawk, will guide their action in the most important crises.

A word must be said here about the series of photographs (a few of which are beautifully coloured). They are of singular merit, and quite absorbing interest. We cannot remember a work that has been provided with such a gallery.

Finally, mention should be made of Mr. Haddon's valuable appendix upon "the physical characters of the races and peoples of Borneo."

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